

WORKS

OF

THE LATE REVEREND

WILLIAM ROMAINÉ, A. M.

RECTOR OF

SAINT ANDREW BY THE WARDROBE,

AND

SAINT ANN, BLACKFRIARS,

AND

LECTURER OF SAINT DUNSTAN, IN THE WEST,

London.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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VOL II

PRINTED FOR T. CHAPMAN, 11, PATERNOSTER STREET

A

TREATISE

UPON THE

WALK OF FAITH.

PART II.

Walk humbly with THY God. Micah vi. 3.



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WALK OF FAITH.

The history of the Christian Church, from the birth of Christ to the present time, in a series of walks, or stages, of the Christian's journey.

Part II.

Walks from the birth of Christ to the birth of the Virgin Mary.

The history of the Christian Church, from the birth of Christ to the present time, in a series of walks, or stages, of the Christian's journey.

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TREATISE,

CHAP. IX.

The believer exercised with the outward cross carries it with patience, and finds it a great help to him in his walk heavenwards.

WE call that a cross, which opposes our will. This opposition renders it painful and grievous. A very little matter, the least trifle, becomes a great cross, when our will is set much against it. How then can the believer rejoice with an heavy cross upon his back? Or how can he rejoice all his days, if he must carry it to his grave? The blessed gospel discovers how this may be, and the blessed spirit gives the experience of it: for he continues to teach the doctrines of grace, and under the cross he enforces them. What has been treated of in the former chapters

WALK OF FAITH.

chapters he now applies with life and power. The doctrines are put to the trial, and it appears that they are of God: for none could produce the effects which follow upon believing them, but an almighty arm. Faith is tried in the fire, and the believer is convinced it is the faith of God's elect: for the promise is made good—"When thou walkest through the very fire thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." His love to his reconciled God is put into the fiery furnace, and it comes out, like the three children, sensible their God had been with them in the furnace; and their God had brought them out; for which marvellous instances of his love to them, their love was increased to him. This is God's way. He gives grace, and then tries it. When he has enabled the sinner by believing to find peace and love, then he would improve those graces by daily exercise, and if the exercise of them be very sharp and afflicting, it is only to establish the trust of his heart, and to confirm the affection of his soul more perfectly in his God. His God. Mind that. His God still. The cross is not sent to weaken that relation. He is the same tender Father to his children, when he puts it upon them, as when he takes it off: and he would have them by faith to experience it. While they depend on his being perfectly reconciled to them through the obedience and sacrifice

face of Immanuel, they will see the same paternal affection invariably set upon them, and always disposed to do them good. His love changeth not. The happy objects of it have given this glorious testimony, even when under his cross—"WE KNOW that all things work "together for good"--they found it so. Whatever he sent to them came with a message of his love. "Hear ye the rod, and him that sent "it." They hear what he says by it, for it speaks of the Father's love, and the belief of this quiets their minds under the stroke of his rod. Thus it answers his purpose—This cometh not forth of the dust, but is appointed for me; my Father sent it, not in anger for the punishment of my sins, but in the tenderness of his affection—He is not dealing with me as the supreme disposer of all events, who may afflict and justly his rebel creatures according to his sovereign will; but he has sent me this affliction with a message of grace and peace—I know it is well ordered—I kiss the rod, and I bless him that sent it.

The apostle Paul uses this argument to the suffering Hebrews. They had endured a long and great fight of afflictions. They had need of patience: He therefore gives them in the 11th chapter a short history of the Lord's favorites, and shews that they all carried his cross, and that he supported them all under it: Yea gave them

strength to run their race, till every one of them won the prize : Then he requires them to look to Jesus, the greatest sufferer, out of whose fullness they might receive faith to run, and patience happily to finish the same race. And lest they should be weary through suffering long, or faint in their minds under hard suffering, he reminds them of the character of their heavenly Father, who out of the tenderest love appointed their crosses:—"Have ye forgotten the exhortation," says the apostle, in which your Father speaketh "unto you as unto children? My son, despise "not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint "when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the "Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every "son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening God dealeth with you as with sons: For "what son is he whom the Father chasteneth "not? But if ye be without chastisement, where- "of ALL are partakers, then are ye bastards, "and not sons." O what a blessed exhortation! How full of love--the love of God the Father--love to his child, who wants correction--love that would not touch him with the rod, till he had most tenderly informed him of his gracious purpose: My son, my beloved, this chastening is from thy Father. It was determined for thee by covenant love, and settled upon thee for thy portion in the great charter of heaven. All thy crosses were then mercifully appointed--their weight

weight and measure—how long—how great—how many—what strength was needful to bear them—what comforts under them—and what holy fruits should be produced by them—all was fixed by love, is now given in love, and is to bring thee to greater enjoyment of my love. My dear child, despise not then my chastening, nor faint when I rebuke thee. Be assured it is for thy good. There is a *needs must*. It is so necessary, that I cannot love thee without chastening thee, nor receive thee among mine adopted without scourging thee. See then, how thou takest my correction. Look at thy temper and behaviour under it. Examine. Art thou patient? Not suffering merely, but suffering quietly is the proof of thine adoption—If ye **ENDURE** chastening—If when I afflict, thou canst possess thy soul in patience under mine afflicting hand, then I deal with thee as with sons—I give thee thy portion of suffering, and I give thee thy portion of grace to bear it. All my children want correcting, and they all have it: for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? They are all sufferers. Mine only begotten was the greatest. None of you can suffer as he did: But whoever is following him must share with him in his cross, and bear it after him. If any be without my chastisement, whereof all mine are partakers: If they cannot bear it, have not faith to receive my loving correction, and therefore no patience

to wait the blessed issue of it, such do not belong to my family; they are none of mine; they are bastards, and not sons.

How should the argument in this scripture reconcile the believer to suffering? How easy, yea how happy, should it make him under the cross? He suffers, but it is from his Father, who in most perfect love and infinite wisdom appointed the cross, and appointed also the precious fruits, which it should produce. O my soul, keep this in mind. Remember whose cross thou art carrying. Thy Father contrived it. He sent, and continues it that it may work under him for the best. It is the chastening of his richest love. Receive it then patiently, thankfully at his hands, and thou wilt find it full of blessings. But take heed how thou consultest sense or carnal reason. These are always enemies to the cross: for they judge of it only by feeling, and always refuse to believe what God says concerning it. Adhere to the truth: And reject every suggestion, which would insinuate to thee, that there is any thing but love in the chastening of the Lord. He is thy Father. He never loves thee more, than when he chastens thee. There is no hatred in his heart. No vengeance in his hand. He assures thee of this from the infallible word of his mouth. Here may thy faith be settled: Believe him—he is doing thee good—he is promoting thy best interest. Cast not away this confidence,

and then the cross will be the means of bringing thee to the nearest and holiest communion, which thou canst have with thy Father on this side heaven.

In this amiable light look upon thy Father and thy friend. Never forget it, O my soul, but keep it in the faith of thy heart, especially when he chasteneth thee. Then expect from his love patience under his stroke, and after it the peaceable fruits of righteousness. These will grow abundantly upon the cross. They grow no where else so rich and ripe. Survey the promises, which he has made to his suffering children, and wait in faith for a joyful harvest. In due season thou shalt reap, if thou faint not. And the cross is intended to keep thee from fainting; because thy Father sends it for the increase and for the strengthening of thy faith. Read and study what he says to thee upon this point. Learn and inwardly digest it. In time of trouble thou wilt find great comfort from depending upon the promise of the Father to give thee an happy issue. Meditate then upon the scriptures, in which he has declared his gracious purposes in afflicting his children, namely,

First, it is for the trial of faith. God gives it, and then tries it; that it may appear to be his grace, that men may see it, and honor him for it, and that it may grow by use, which is as necessary to spiritual, as exercise is to bodily growth.

Trial

Trial shews the truth, and brings forth the power of grace, and is thereby a matter of great joy : as the apostle James testifies writing to the twelve tribes in their dispersion and affliction. “ My
“ brethren, count it ALL JOY, when ye fall into
“ divers temptations, knowing this, that the try-
“ ing of your faith worketh patience ; but let
“ patience have its perfect work, that ye may be
“ perfect, and entire, wanting nothing.” God be thanked for this word of strong consolation. What a precious scripture is it ! How full of encouragement to the believer to look with delight at *temptations* !—not temptations to sin, but trials, sent from God to keep from sin. When he falls into them by providence, and meets them in the way of duty, then he should judge of them, not from sense, which can feel nothing but sorrow in afflictions, but he should take account of them from the declared purpose of God in sending them, and he should wait in faith for the blessings which they are to produce. God says, that they are matter of joy, of ALL JOY, of all true spiritual joy—they are not only such in his account, but he also makes them such to the believer. Accordingly we read in scripture of many who did rejoice in trials. The Hebrews did : For they took JOYFULLY the spoiling of their goods. Paul did : I am comforted, says he, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation. Nay, he went farther—We GLORY in tribulations. He
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leaped for joy with the cross upon his back. He boasted and triumphed under it. What the world accounted his worst, he made his very crown of rejoicing : For he knew and found, that the trial of faith worketh patience : Faith receives the cross from the Father's love, and learns to bear it after Jesus : By the grace of the Spirit the bearing of it, as it exercises, so it improves patience. The believer becomes more acquainted with it. Use, we say, makes perfect. He learns, where the strength to bear is—from whence his comforts are to flow—and from whose hand the blessed issue is to be received. He waits therefore with sweet submission to his Father's will, that patience may have its perfect work, that by trials it may be exercised, by sharper trials it may be improved, and by daily trials it may appear to be the genuine grace of the Spirit, perfect and entire, lacking nothing. This the believer aims at. He would have every thing that belongs to true patience, and growth in it ; he would have it refined by every fiery trial, and made purer and brighter, that it may hold out, till it have done its perfect work. The apostle Peter gives the same encouragement to the same afflicted Hebrews : He exhorts them to faith and patience under their sufferings in these words—" Ye are kept by the
" power of God through faith unto salvation,
" ready to be revealed in the last time ; wherein
" ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if
" need

“ need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” What treasures of love are laid open in this scripture! Read, O my soul, and adore the exceeding riches of thy Father’s grace. He knew how needful afflictions were, both for the flesh and for the spirit, and therefore he appointed thee thy portion, and he has in mercy informed thee of his design in them. He has revealed his will for the ground of thy faith, that when he sends them, thou mightest experience the blessings promised to his suffering children. The belief of his love in contriving and in proportioning them to the ability given thee to bear them would administer matter of joy in sorrow, and by trusting to his faithfulness thou wouldst greatly rejoice; thy joy would so far exceed thy sorrow. The heaviness is but for a season---the joy for ever. The heaviness only during the trial of faith---the joy increased by that very trial. The trial was only to prove the truth of faith, and to evidence the power of it---not to weaken, but to strengthen it---not to destroy, but to refine it. The refiner does not intend to lose one atom of his gold, but puts it into the fire to purge away the dross. So does God. When he hath tried me, says Job, I shall

shall come forth as gold. He was tried in the fire, and his faith was found unto praise and honor and glory. Therefore he is set forth for an example of suffering affliction and of patience. Behold, we account them happy, not who suffer, but who endure suffering. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord abounds in compassion, and is of tender mercy. O my soul, wait upon the same Lord, and he will bring all thy trials to the same blessed end. He has the same pity and mercy to thee, as he had to Job. Thou hast the same reason to believe it, as he had. Thy faith is tried in the fire, as he was, that it may come out of it like gold. The trial was appointed in perfect love, and is to produce the greatest blessings of love. Thy God has most gracious designs towards thee in putting thee into the fire. It is to try thy faith; whether thou canst trust him there. It is to improve thy faith by the trial, that thou mayest trust him more. If thou hast trusting faith, it is to teach thee patient faith. It is a hard lesson to learn to trust against sense and carnal reason, and to say, This cross is good for me, I desire to submit, and to take it patiently at the hand of God. O it is very hard to believe that there is nothing but love in every suffering, and it is harder to find it so, while suffering. And yet the Spirit of God declares there
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is nothing but love in it, and by believing thou wilt certainly find it. May every trial of thy faith establish it, and thereby bring forth

Secondly, The blessed fruit of patience. The cross does good to faith: because by it God teaches his children to bear up, and to hold out, trusting to his promises and waiting in hope for his fulfilling them, and thus it exercises patience. Which is a grace of the Spirit, learned only in the school of Christ, and therefore the giver of it among his other high titles is called, *the God of patience*. He first enables his afflicted children to believe what he has said of his love in afflicting them, and then to wait for the experience of his love under their afflictions. This waiting quietly, without giving way to sense, or unbelief is patience. Faith is tried, and stands the trial. Tribulation comes, faith is exercised with it, but holds fast its confidence in the word of God, and thereby has full proof of the faithfulness of God. This worketh patience—a quiet submission to the divine will—and an holy subjection to the divine rod. The flesh murmurs, self-will repines, self-indulgence rebels; but faith looks up for the promised strength and by it conquers them. It stops their mouths with a Hush—Be still and know that he is God—He is my sovereign and my Father—this affliction indeed is not for the present joyous, but rather grievous—nevertheless
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it comes from his love, love guides his hand, love will bring good out of it—O that all within me may submit to his will, and bless his name.

But the cross is hard and painful; flesh and blood cannot bear it. True, but grace can. To endure is the proper work of patience. It endures by trusting to the word of God, and by receiving from him the promised strength. What cannot such a grace endure? When God says, "Fear not, I will be with thee, when thou goest through the fire;" the believer is hereby forewarned of the fire, and when he is called to go through it, he expects the presence of his God, that if the bush burn, it may not be consumed. How comfortably does the apostle Peter speak of this to the suffering Hebrews? "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though some strange thing had come unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." He would have them to be accustomed to the cross, it being the only way to the crown. There is nothing new or strange in it. All the crowned heads in heaven carried it, while they were upon earth: yea the king of saints went bearing it before them. There never was sorrow like unto his sorrow: and yet for the joy that

that was set before him, he endured the cross, and despised the shame. Take up thy cross, O my soul, and follow him. Look unto Jesus. He will give thee strength. He has taken the curse and wrath out of thy suffering. Thou wilt see it the fruit of his love to thee, and it will be the means of engaging thy love to him. What, if it be a burning fiery furnace: Is it not almighty love, which calls thee to go into it? Not to hurt thee, but to try thee, to give thee happy proof of the soundness of thy faith, and of the power of thy patience. He would have thee to know, that thy patience trusting to his tried word is invincible: that no blow can beat it, no fire can burn it, from Christ. He would bring thee to experience what the prophet did, when he said —“Thy word is tried to the uttermost, and thy servant loveth it.” The good word of God was tried, as far as it could be, and the trial proved its truth, and therefore he had fresh reason to love it. The trial increased his confidence in the truth, and his experience in the sweetness of its promises; thereby his patience was confirmed, and he could rejoice, inasmuch as he was a partaker of Christ’s sufferings, both of their infinite sufficiency, and also of their mighty efficacy to save. By enjoying these blessings under the cross, his heart was happy in the joy set before him. He had the earnest and the foretaste of

of heaven : for he knew, that when the glory of Jesus should be revealed, he should be glad with exceeding joy.

But the carnal mind is ready to complain-- This would be true, if the suffering was short, but it is long, as well as hard--I have borne up a great while, but now my patience is quite tired out--I am ready to give all up, being weary of my life with the length of my trials. How many have I known in this melancholy case? Fair blossoms in the mild and gentle spring. In fine weather and smiling sunshine they looked beautiful, and gave hopes of their being in the tree of life, and of their growing and ripening upon it. But alas! a trying time came, a bleak cold north wind, and a very sharp piercing frost--like leaves in autumn, down fell the promising bloom. My heart has mourned again and again at the fall of one and another, and mourns while I am writing this, over several now living, who have forsaken God and his ways for the world and its delights. They met with trouble, and it was too much for them. They were tempted, and they had not strength to resist. The reason is thus assigned--“ He that received seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while : for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word by and by he is offended.”

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He is offended and falls away, because he had no root: and they, who have root, are too often tempted to be offended at the cross. They find it very difficult to bear up under it. Natural infirmity, remaining corruption, and strength of temptation make pain and suffering grievous to the flesh: yea, when they are forced to bear the cross long, and it is very heavy, they are apt to murmur and fret, grow discontented, are tempted to unbelief, and if they give way to it, to despair. How necessary is it then, that they should be enabled to possess their souls in patience under their great and many trials? To which end nothing can contribute more effectually, than a settled faith in the word and promise of a reconciled God. This will stay and quiet the soul, when trouble comes. It is the chastening of my Lord, says the believer—my loving Father sends it for good—He is only trying my faith and patience, and the trial will end well—it is grievous indeed at present, and I go on my way weeping, but I have my supports now, and I shall soon reap a joyful harvest. I have a faithful promise for it, which is a constant cordial and keeps up my spirits. My God will be with me as long as the trial lasts—he says he will. I believe him, and therefore expect his promised presence and strength, till faith and patience have their perfect work. Such a cordial the apostle James gives to the Hebrews. They wanted

wanted it much. They were greatly oppressed by the rich, and some of them were persecuted even unto death. "Be patient therefore, brethren, says he, unto the coming of the Lord: behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain: be ye also patient: establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." He puts great stress upon the Lord's coming: Yet a very little while and your Lord will come to appear for you: It's true you are in a fiery trial, but your God calls you to it; and it may seem to you a long trial, but he has promised you grace sufficient to bear it: Trust him then, and he will keep you patient. He knows your frame and temper, and bids you look about you. See, how the husbandman waits, having only a general promise, that seed time and harvest shall not fail; and is it not more reasonable that you should wait with patience the end of the Lord. He sows his seed and leaves it. It endures much hard weather, frost and snow, rough winds and wintry storms. Summer comes, but he must still wait: His corn is in ear, yet it is liable to suffer from long drought and from blights, and to be beat down with heavy thunder showers; but he has long patience. At last he is not disappointed of his hope,

hope. He reaps the precious fruit of the earth, and gathers in his joyful harvest. Behold, O my soul, and imitate. How strong is his faith! Is thine like his? God has only said, that the seasons shall not fail: He has not said, that the harvest in every field and country shall not fail, yet the farmer sows in faith and waits in patience. But the promise is sure to thee—"He that believeth shall never be confounded," and dost thou believe this with a hope that maketh not ashamed? He has long patience: How is thine? Art thou not weary and faint in thy mind, especially when the course of providence seems to run counter to thy hope? Canst thou hold thee still in the Lord, and abide patiently upon him, when he chastises thee, and seems in anger to cast thee off? He waits long for an harvest of perishing things, and canst not thou wait to have thy fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life? O what need hast thou of patience! Seek it, pray for it, beg of thy God to establish thy heart: that thou mayest be rooted and grounded in faith: And if troubles come great and heavy, thou mayest possess thy soul in patience, so long as the Lord shall please to exercise thee with them. And never forget that he will certainly come, and quickly. Let this promise keep thee from fainting. He will come in with his supports; he will administer his comforts under the cross; he will remove it in

in due season. What can be required for the establishing of thy heart, which is not promised to thee in this scripture? "Cast not away
 "therefore your confidence, which hath great
 "recompence of reward: For ye have need of
 "patience, that after ye have done the will of
 "God, ye might receive the promise: For it is
 "but a very little while, and he that shall come
 "will come, and will not tarry. Wait then on
 "the Lord, O my soul; be of good courage, and
 "he shall strengthen thine heart: Wait, I say,
 "on the Lord."

Perhaps thou art ready to reply--I have waited long, but am still to learn: for my trials are so various, that as soon as I have been well exercised with one sort, presently it is changed, and another comes, to which I was not accustomed--And this continually, like Job's messengers; one after another, and still the last brings a sadder message than the former--Hard and long trials I have endured, but this constant change of them wearies me out; they come so unexpected, they find me so unprepared, they so harass my troubled mind, that I am ready to sink under them--frequently I am tempted to think, that if God loved me, he would not delight in afflicting me in this manner.

Thus the carnal mind is apt to reason against God and his ways: But when the believer goes into the sanctuary and consults the oracle, he

receives an answer of grace and peace, and is satisfied that this change of trials is nothing new with God. It is his usual method of training up his children in faith and patience. He appoints troubles for the exercise, and all sorts of troubles for the improvement of their graces. The captain of their salvation was made perfect through sufferings: So are all the soldiers of Christ Jesus. It was the remark of one of his champions—**MANY** are the troubles of the righteous. The apostle James speaking of the persecuted Hebrews says, they had **DIVERS** temptations, different one from another; and his brother Peter tries to comfort them under their **MANIFOLD** afflictions, many in number, succeeding as fast as wave follows after wave, and of many kinds, some distressed them in their bodies, others in their minds, in their character, in their substance, in their families, in every way that affliction could be felt. Patience is the grace suited to all these trials: Because it bears them in the strength of God: For it consists in trusting to his sure word of promise, and believing it against sense and feeling: Faith says, this present trial comes from the love of my covenant God: Patience says, then I will bear it, till he bring it to a good issue. Whatever the trial be, patience has the same promise, and the same promise-keeping God to trust in. If he send variety of trials, it is only to give a variety of proofs,

proofs, that he is faithful, who hath promised. He knows we have divers diseases, which must have divers remedies to heal them. We have manifold evils in us, which require manifold afflictions to subdue them. And our God intends to give us many blessings, and he appoints many troubles to bring us to the enjoyment of them. All these are gracious dispensations, mercifully contrived, and seasonably administered, that patience may learn to bear, and may learn to persevere in bearing. God changes the trial. Patience has a new lesson, and a new opportunity of improvement. A good teacher brings his scholars forward, and when they are gone through one book and are well grounded in it, then he advances them to another: When they have learned Latin, he puts them into Greek. But he does not change their studies out of ill-will or hatred to his scholars. They had rather be at play, than minding their books; and they had rather get but one lesson, and be saying it over from day to day; but the master knows what is best for them, and he keeps them to their work. God trains up his scholars in various exercises, but all for their improvement. He does not consult what would please them, but he changes the lesson, as he sees needful. He knows when their faith wants confirming, when their patience needs establishing, and therefore in much mercy he sends a new trial for the growth of those

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graces.

graces. Lest they should mistake his meaning in varying his trials so often, he gives them this general rule—"There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." The Father will exercise his children with no trial, but such as is common to man; and he will enable them to bear it; and will make a way for them to escape. How should these considerations silence their murmurings? If the trial be new to them, yet it is common to man. If it be hard to bear, yet grace is almighty to strengthen patience. If it last long, yet it shall end well. How convincing are these reasons? How patiently should believers, influenced by them, submit to the chastening of the Lord? And yet there is still unbelief in them, which will be urging fresh complaints, and stirring up impatience.

The poor sufferer, feeling his smart, is apt to think—Any cross, but mine, would be tolerable—I should not say one word against God, if he tried me with any other; but this cuts me to the heart—Oh it is a very agony both to my flesh and spirit—there is nothing like it—it is so exactly calculated to cross my temper, to hurt me in the tenderest part, and to rob me of my most beloved gratification, that it is the very thing

thing in the world, from which I could have wished to be exempted—Any cross, Lord, but this.

Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest thus against God? Hold thy tongue as it were with a bridle. Let not self-will murmur, and folly speak against the chastening of the Lord. He says that he is dealing with thee as with sons. Where is thy faith then? that sense and feeling should be permitted to plead, and to be heard against the witness of God in his word. Where is thy patience? that thou canst not bear the present cross, but wouldst take up any other. Alas! alas! mistaken man—what canst thou bear in thine own strength? Thou feelest the smart of thy present cross, and it makes thee peevish and fretful: The smart of any other would have the very same effect. A less than this, the least thing in the world, that opposes thy will, would stir up thine impatience. Observe thy temper, how it catches fire at any little opposition from men. The same temper will be inflamed and rage, when God chastises thee, if thou refuse to receive his correction. Thy rebel-will is the cause of thy pain, and makes thy cross so bitter: For if God's will and thine were one, there could be no cross; but his will is almighty, and yet thou resistest it. God puts his yoke upon thee, and thou art like a stubborn beast, which only hurts and galls itself by striving
and

and kicking against its work. He tries thee with one cross, and thou art dissatisfied, thou couldst contrive a better for thyself. Thou wouldst be thine own lord and governor. Self-will, they say, is a sure guide to self-destruction. Beware then of thine own will. When God calls thee to take up any cross, do not wish for another. He sends this, and to it he requires thy submission. It is thy duty, and thine interest to receive it for the exercise and for the improvement of thy patience; but instead of taking it up quietly, and waiting for the good fruit of it, thou art quarrelling with it, and opposing the will of God. O take heed of this vain attempt. It is a snare laid for thee. A fatal trap, into which the love of independence seduced the first man, and which ever since easily ensnares his posterity. When thou art tempted to murmur at thy present cross—consider what it is—meditate a moment upon thy Father's love, who most mercifully appointed, who most seasonably sent it—and if it be nothing strange, but common to man, then do not try to shift it off, but seek the promised grace to bear it. There is not a cross, that he will lay upon thee, but he has laid it before upon others, and it will tend greatly to the peace of thy mind, and to the restraining of thine own will, to observe how he dealt with them. Take notice then, how he in love exercised them with every cross, that can be laid upon thee, how he supported

supported them under it, and what blessed fruit they reaped from it.

This is the kingdom of the cross; and it is the Lord's will, that every disciple in it should be as his master. He has chosen them to suffer with him, as well as to reign with him. And therefore intending to call forth his gifts and graces into daily exercise, he has honored them with the daily cross. He sees it needful often to change it, and he has informed them of his gracious designs herein. There is scarce any kind of suffering, but some or other of his people have been tried with it, and he has left promises in scripture of his support, and of his coming in with comfort, and in due time with deliverance. So that whatever thy cross be, it is not sent, O my soul, to hinder, but to promote communion with thy God, and to help thee forward in the heavenly way.

Art thou pinched with poverty--a believer, but in distressed circumstances? Blessed art thou of the Lord. "Hearken, my beloved brother, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him?" What a mercy is it to have thine outward estate thus appointed for thee by the choice of thy heavenly Father! And the same estate which he chose for his best beloved. In the exceeding riches of his love he decreed, that thou shouldst
be

be poor in this world, as Jesus was—He knew it was best for thee—and he chose the rich in faith—outward poverty was to be the means of thine improvement in spiritual riches—thy want of temporals was to bring thee to live more by faith upon eternal things. O how good is thy God! He sent thee poverty to enrich thee. It is to bring thee near to God, to keep thee near to him, and to afford thee daily proof of his precious love. These are some of the blessings of rich faith, and these are worth more than all the treasures of the world. Be content then—thy God will supply all thy need. Be thankful—thou art an heir of the kingdom. Bless thy God—no creature out of heaven has more reason to bless him, than thou hast—He is thine—All things are thine.

Perhaps thou art tried with bodily pain and sickness: These are hard trials. To endure them is the very crown of patience; but strength to endure them is promised, and in waiting upon the Lord will be received; so that outward pains shall produce inward joy. Thus we read: “The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.” He is weak, God strengthens him. He is sick, God comforts him. He is in pain, God smooths his bed, and he lies patient. Sickness cannot be pleasant in itself; but is profitable for its fruits. It is the appointment of
God,

God, and teaches submission to his sovereign will. It comes to the believer with a message of precious love—This bitter cup is sent from thy heavenly Father, who has many gracious purposes to answer by thy taking it—He would humble thee and let thee feel what thou art, and what thou deservest—he would mortify the life of sense—He would give occasion to increase faith and to advance patience—Drink it up—There is a rich cordial at the bottom—The taste of it will draw out thy heart in love to God. Happy sickness! which promotes spiritual health. Blessed pain! which the kind physician often makes the way to pleasure, yea to the sweetest communications of his love.

Art thou in the fire of persecution? Are thy friends and relations all in arms against thee for leaving them to follow Christ? Is thy dependence upon them, and art thou greatly tempted to make some compliances, lest they should cast thee out, and thou shouldst come to poverty? This may be a fiery trial; but it is a blessed one. He will make it so, who says, "Blessed are ye
" when men shall revile you, and persecute you,
" and shall say all manner of evil against you
" falsely for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding
" glad: Because great is your reward in heaven:
" For so persecuted they the prophets who were
" before you." This persecution will be so far from stopping thee in thy way, that it will both
3 help

help thee forward, and will also make thy journey pleasant. Thy friends revile thee: Look up to him, who when he was reviled, reviled not again: He will turn their reproach into a blessing. They persecute thee: the goodly fellowship of the prophets carried the same cross, and found it no hinderance to their spiritual joy. They say all manner of evil of thee: Take heed that they say it falsely, and for Christ's sake; and if thou suffer for him, and art evil spoken of for thine attachment to him, then rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is thy reward in heaven. Thou art a sufferer with him, and thou shalt also reign with him. Look forward to the promised kingdom. Expect it in faith, and the prospect will give thee at every step joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Perhaps this persecution may be carried on to acts of injustice, even to the depriving thee of thy property: thou mayest suffer the loss of all thy worldly goods for Christ's sake. When God calls thee to this trial, he will give thee strength to bear it, and thou shalt be a great gainer by thy loss. So Paul found it—"I have suffered the loss of all things, and I do account them but dung that I may win Christ." So it was with the Hebrews—"They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves, that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance." What love was here! God

was

was their portion, and their great reward. He had made them happy in the sense of his love; and to manifest the reality, and to demonstrate the power of it, what great things love can do for his name's sake, he took away all their earthly delights. Let them go, says Paul, I part with them as freely as I would with so much dung, for I have experienced that the loss of them has brought me to nearer fellowship with my precious, most precious Jesus. Happy parting, say the Hebrews, farewell goods and chattels—we rejoice at the spoiling of our goods: because we have got faster hold of the substance by the loss of the shadow—outward comforts are gone, but inwardly richly supply their place—we are robbed of our earthly possessions, thank God we cannot be robbed of our better and enduring substance: for it is reserved in heaven for us, where no moth or rust can corrupt, and where no thieves can break through or steal: in this faith we find our hearts free and light and happy in running the race that is set before us.

Thy trial may be something still nearer. It may be the loss of thy dearest relations. The wife of thy bosom is taken from thee. Thy favourite child is dead, perhaps drowned, or burned, or killed at a stroke: the delight of thine eyes is gone, and thine heart is ready to break. All sorrow is not forbidden, but sorrowing even

as others, who have no hope. Tears may flow, but christian hope keeps them within their proper bounds: it restrains and sanctifies them. Thy wife is dead: thy child is dead. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. He requires thee to forsake loving wife and children, be they ever so dear, if love of them cannot be enjoyed without forfeiting his love. "And there were
" great multitudes with Christ, and he turned
" and said unto them, if any man come unto me,
" and hate not his father and mother, and wife
" and children, and brethren, and sisters, he
" cannot be my disciple." The disciple gives up himself to the master's disposal—to learn of him—to believe in him—and to love him. My son, says he, give me thy heart. He has a right to it, and he will admit of no rival. It is his temple and his throne; in which he alone will be worshipped and honored. He is a jealous God, and if any love hinder love to him, it must be torn from the heart. O disciple, read this scripture, study it carefully, and it may be the means of shewing thee the true cause of thy great sorrow about worldly relations: it is because thou hast so little love to thy best relation and friend, Jesus Christ. If thy love to him was what it should be, thy heart would not be so grieved at those losses; but would in patient submission acknowledge—It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.

Perhaps

Perhaps thou art mourning for the loss of living friends. They have forsaken thee. Old connections, as dear to thee as thine own soul, are broken. Persons, whom thou hadst known from thy childhood, and with whom thou hadst grown up in strict friendship, are now thine enemies, and become so without any offence or fault of thine. They hate thee, because thou art a real christian, and their hatred is harder to bear, because the world joins them in it, and thy name is every where cast out with contempt.

It must be so. The decree cannot be altered—**I WILL PUT** enmity between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent. God put it, and put it for ever. The enmity broke out, as soon as there were two born into the world. Cain hated Abel, and slew him. Ever since, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit. There has been one, and but one perfect man upon the earth since the fall, and the enmity of the world followed him unto death. Lest we should marvel at its following us, he has forewarned us—“If the world
 “hate you, ye know that it hated me before it
 “hated you: if ye were of the world, the world
 “would love its own, but because ye are not of
 “the world, but I have chosen you out of the
 “world, therefore the world hateth you.” What a strange reason is this! Because I love you, therefore the world hates you. What God chooses,
 the

the world rejects. Why then, O my soul, dost thou court its smiles, or fear its frowns? The world, which lieth in wickedness, cannot love thee, and its enmity cannot hurt thee. Remember the words of Jesus—"These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace: in the world ye SHALL have tribulation, but be of good courage, I have overcome the world." I have overcome it for you, and I will overcome it in you: tribulation from it shall not hurt your peace in me, but shall increase it: I will make my love the sweeter for its enmity: troubles from it shall be well repaid with my joys: and when it quite casts you out, then will I take you into my bosom, and let you know what the affection of the heavenly bridegroom is.

Why then, O my soul, art thou afraid of such an exchange? Is it not for thy profit to part with the world for Christ, and to give up its joys for his? What greater gain canst thou expect, than to win Christ, and by him to be crucified to this present evil world? Dying to it thou wilt be more alive to him, and therefore happier in him. As other ties are dissolved, thy heart will be knit closer to thy divine lover. Warmed with his precious love, "cloathed with the sun, and the moon under thy feet" thou wilt hasten thy steps heavenwards; yea, thou wilt be ready to take wing and to fly to the embraces of thy dear,

ever,

ever, infinitely dear Jesus. Thou wilt want no comment upon the words of the bride the Lamb's wife, but wilt gladly use them after her — "Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like
"to a roe, or to a young hart upon the moun-
"tains of spices."

In former ages the children of God were often deprived of their liberty, cast into prisons and bound in chains. This seems to us an heavy cross. To be shut up in a dark dungeon, put into fetters, and deprived of every worldly comfort, requires great patience: but even this did not stop them in their way to heaven, nor in the enjoyment of God by the way. Paul the prisoner of the Lord often mentions it among his highest honors, that he was accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ. He and Silas were cruelly beaten with many stripes at Philippi, were put into the inner prison, and their feet fastened in the stocks; but the Lord was with them, and he turned their prison into a paradise: his joy made them forget their wounds and pains: for at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and SANG PRAISES unto God. This has often been the case since their time: the Lord has often visited his prisoners, and the light of his countenance has made them happy in their bonds. Indeed we are not called to this kind of suffering at present; thanks be to his grace. This is a day of such uncommon mercies, that we have more to fear
from

from our want of thankfulness, than from our want of liberty. I pray God we may not grow licentious, and abuse our great privileges, but may he enable us so to value them and live up to them, that he may be honoured for continuing them to us, and to our posterity.

In former times also believers were often forced to seal the testimony of Jesus with their blood. And even this did not stop them in their walk, nor hinder their communion with God. Hear one of his martyrs—"The holy Ghost witnesseth, "that bonds and afflictions wait for me in every "city: but none of these things move me, nei- "ther account I my life dear unto myself, so that "I may finish my course with joy, and the mi- "nisty, which I have received of the Lord "Jesus." This was not a vain brag. He spake it in humble faith, depending upon his master's promise, that he would stand by him, when his blood should be shed, and would make him an happy conqueror in the hour of death. And he was more than conqueror; but the grace, which made him so, was not peculiar to, or the privilege of, an apostle; the same was given to a noble army of martyrs: who overcame satan by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death. What a triumph of patience was this! They were enabled to bear any thing, even the loss of life, rather than suffer the loss of their

their Lord's favor. Examine, O my soul, whether thy faith be like theirs. Canst thou endure, as they did? How is thy patience under the cross? Read what they went through, who are well reported of by the Holy Ghost for their faith, and remember the same grace is promised to thee to carry thee patiently through all thy sufferings—"They had trials of cruel mockings
 "and scourgings, yea moreover of bonds and
 "imprisonments: they were stoned, they were
 "sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with
 "the sword; they wandered about in sheep
 "skins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted,
 "tormented; of whom the world was not worthy, they wandered in deserts and in mountains,
 "and in dens and in caves of the earth, and these
 "all obtained a good report through faith." They are celebrated by the holy Spirit for having patiently endured, till they had run their race, and finished their course with joy. He sets their example before thee, that thou shouldst not be slothful in running the same race, but a follower of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Meditate seriously, O my soul, and reflect again and again upon the great need thou hast of patience. Remember the cross lies in thy way to the crown, and thou canst not avoid it. The Lord has appointed it to be thy portion, and it is entailed upon thee, as much as the

kingdom is. When he exercises and tries thee with it, he does not act merely as a sovereign, but as a Father. He deals with thee, as with sons. His children want, and his children have correction. None are without it. But they find it hard to bear. The will of the flesh is impatient under the cross. Self-love hates it. Carnal reason cannot be reconciled to it. If it be thus with sons, what must it be with bastards? The natural man, when he is brought into great trouble, is like a mad beast. If his pains be sharp and acute, he rages, frowns, and blasphemes: if they be also lasting, having no God to go to, he often gives way to despair, and dispatches himself with a pistol, running to hell for relief. O my soul, marvel not at this. If God had left thee to thyself, the same trials might have brought thee to the same unhappy end. How necessary then is patience? without it thou canst not bear the cross, nor hold on thy way under it, nor profit from it. And how necessary are the doctrines before insisted on, for the practice of patience? No one can submit to bear the cross, unless he be first persuaded that God is reconciled to him and loves him in his Son. When he is satisfied of this, he will see all things (the cross among the rest) well ordered for him in the covenant, and all working together for the best. The cross is mercifully sent to make a trial of these doctrines: by it God would

kingdom D II manifest

manifest the truth and bring forth the power of them, that it may appear they were not learned, as notions, but experienced by his almighty grace. His end is answered. The trial of faith establishes the peace of God in the conscience, and confirms the love of God in the heart, and thereby keeps patience waiting for strength to hold out, and for a blessed issue. The believer made strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus endures patiently. He knows from whom his cross comes. It is the appointment of his Father; who does not send it in hatred. He never afflicts his children, but in perfect love. He never put a heavy cross upon them to break the back of their patience, but to strengthen it, and to train them up to bear greater burdens. He would teach them their weakness, and his strength—their wants, and his supplies—he would call forth their faith for the honor of his word—and their patience for the glory of his faithfulness. Lord, teach me these lessons. I want the experience of them every day. O my God, make me an humble disciple in the school of Christ. There only can I learn to suffer thy will; to thee I come for this grace. Assist me, O thou Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in reading thy word, that through patience and comfort of the scriptures I may have hope. Enable me to meditate night and day on the doctrines of grace revealed in them, and to mix faith with them, that I may

be strong in the patience of hope. O merciful God and Father, I desire to be strengthened mightily by thy Spirit in the inner man to bear thy cross. I would live in a continual dependence upon thine arm to carry me through every trial. O thou God of patience and consolation, enable me to bear thy cross daily to the praise of the glory of thy grace, and to bear it patiently to the end, that I may finish my course with joy. Be it unto thy servant according to thy word, wherein thou hast caused me to put my trust. *Amen*, so be it Lord, *Amen*.

To receive benefit from afflictions is a great blessing. To suffer them with a resigned will, yea to rejoice in them, as if all the joy in the world was come to us, is contrary to sense and feeling; to carnal reason and to human philosophy; therefore our heavenly Father has graciously informed his children of his love in afflicting them: These informations are the ground of their faith, and were given to silence murmuring in their hearts, and to keep them waiting patiently for the promised fruits of suffering. Among which this is a

THIRD, and not the least, namely, the crucifying of the flesh, and the deadening of it in those affections and lusts, which, if not daily mortified, should stop the believer in his walk, and would hinder his holy communion with God. When faith has been tried, and is come

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out of the fire, proved to be the faith of God's elect, and when patience has gone through the fiery furnace and has found no harm, then it is the Father's will to advance and to improve his children in the doctrine of the cross. They have a carnal mind still, which is enmity against God—a body of sin—an old man of sin—the flesh in them lusting against the spirit. This their fleshly nature, which doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated, is the greatest enemy to their holy walk with God in constant peace, and growing love: Because it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The life of sense in them is always opposing the life of God. Hence the continual war between nature and grace, which if a man does not find in himself, he may depend upon it, he either never was alive to God, or else at that time he is dead to God. If he be living by the faith of the Son of God, he will also be fighting the good fight of faith against all the enemies of his salvation. He will never think of putting off the whole armor of God until he put off the body of sin and of death: And until that day come, he will be striving for the mastery over his body, that he may keep it under and bring it into subjection. How absolutely necessary this striving is, appears from the tender compassion of our God and Father, who has appointed and decreed in covenant love all the crosses, which
were

were to be laid upon our rebel-nature; and which were to be kept upon it, till death. It is his holy will hereby to restrain its affections, to mortify its lusts, to hedge up its way by thorns and afflictions, and by these means he would weaken its power. Is not this mercy unspeakable? And what more likely method could he contrive thus to crucify the flesh, than to put it, and to keep it upon the cross? For as the sinful nature is deadened the new man is renewed day by day. The one grows more alive by the mortification of the other. The subduing of unbelief, pride, and self-seeking is the strengthening of faith, humility, and glorifying God. This command therefore is frequently given to believers--Put off the old man--put on the new--mortify your members which are upon the earth--crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. And this is spoken to believers high in grace, as high as ever any went, or can go. The Spirit of God says to the SAINTS at Rome--"Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof, neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin." The infallible Spirit speaks to the SAINTS at Ephesus--"Put off concerning the former conversation the old man, who is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and put on the new man." The same precept is given by the same Spirit to the SAINTS at Coloss--"Mortify your

"your members which are upon the earth." This is an holy war; and all the saints of God are engaged in it. They are fighting against every thing sinful, but more particularly watching under arms against their own corrupt nature, which is their hardest warfare: Because there is no release from it, and it is carried on by continual self denial, by resisting the affections and lusts of the old man, and by opposing his giving up the members of his body, as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. But as good soldiers of Christ Jesus they resist unto blood striving against sin. The captain of their salvation is always on their side to encourage them with his promises, and to help them with his strength. He intends to lead them on conquering and to conquer, therefore he lays the cross upon their corruptions, as the most effectual means of subduing them, and to reconcile them to it, he speaks unto them, as unto children--

My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord. I do not afflict thee in hatred, but in covenant love. My design is to mortify the body of sin, and therefore I give thee this wholesome physic. Thou hast many bad humors and corruptions, for which I have appointed this sovereign medicine. Trust my skill--believe my love--depend upon mine arm--and thou wilt infallibly find it profitable to the spirit however painful

painful to the flesh. Wait, and the end shall be blessed.

To this truth the prophet Isaiah bears a clear testimony. He explains the Lord's design in afflicting his people, and tells them, it was to purge them from their iniquity, to keep them from the love of sin, and to restrain the practice of it. He afflicted them in mercy: But he afflicted their enemies in justice. Hath he smitten Israel, as he smote those that smote him? No, he has not. Or is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him? No, he chastises his in love; he has appointed the measure, the time, the degree of their correction.

"In measure when it shooteth forth, thou wilt
"debate with it; he stayeth his rough wind in
"the day of his east wind: by this (moderate
"affliction) therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob
"be purged, and this is all the fruit to take
"away his sin."—to keep him back from sin in
general, and from the sin of idolatry in particu-
lar, as it follows in the prophet—"When he
"maketh all the stones of the altar like chalk
"stones that are beaten in sunder, then the
"groves and images shall not stand up." The
altar, at which they offered their idol-worship,
shall be broken down, like stones burnt in pieces
for lime, and the groves and images shall not
stand up, but shall be broken down also. These
happy

happy effects shall be brought about by sanctified affliction—iniquity shall be purged—sin shall be restrained—idolatry shall be thrown down. And God says, this shall be ALL the fruit and end of his chastening. He tells his people of his design, that they might know their affliction would bring forth good fruit, and that they might wait patiently for the fulfilling of his promise. Blessed are all they that wait for him: they shall never be disappointed of their hope.

How gracious is God in his dealings with his children! He provides the best for them, informs them of it, and because they have a fallen nature opposite to his holy mind and will, an enemy to his glory and to their own peace, he acquaints them with his design in subduing it. He appoints affliction for this end. It is the chastening of the Lord. He promises them strength to bear it, and comfort under it. Nothing but good shall flow from it. Iniquity, their worst enemy, shall be crucified: Actual sin, springing from the iniquity of their nature, shall be mortified: the heart shall be deadened to its old idols, and as it dies to them it shall be happier in the love of God. O blessed cross! what mercies dost thou bring with thee? Is not that blessed indeed, which under God produces such unspeakable mercies? Take it up then, O my soul, bear it patiently, and expect the choicest blessings

blessings of the Father's love from it. Why dost thou refuse? It is heavy. It is painful. True, but what makes it so? The burden is from thy rebel will. The pain comes from thy corruption unwilling to be mortified. Take it up in faith, and thou wilt find strength enough to bear it, and blessings enow to make it a matter of all joy. Lord God, reconcile me to my daily cross. May thy will in it be done. Mortify sin, weaken its power, deaden its affections and lusts. Only Lord, whatever cross thou sendest, give grace with it, that I may bear it patiently, and may wait for its promised fruit. Thou knowest what would stop me in my heavenly journey, if it be my bosom favorite, the dearest object of my love, O tear it from my heart. Thou hast given me a desire to have every rival dethroned. O come, and reign alone in me, almighty Jesus, and subdue whatever opposes thy lawful government. My Saviour and my God, make all within me feel the power of thy cross. Crucify the body of sin. Spare nothing that would hinder my walking with thee, or would deprive me of thy friendship and favors. I bless thee, I worship thee, I glorify thee for this infinite grace, that thou hast made me willing to have all mine idols pulled down. On thee I depend every moment for keeping them down. O my loving Jesus, carry on thy work, and in thine downy way subdue sin in me: let me be
 again held planted

planted together in the likeness of thy death, that I may be also in the likeness of thy resurrection—Dead to sin, but alive to God. I ask this for thy great name's sake. Let it be thy good pleasure to hear and answer. I believe thou wilt. I have thy word for it. There I rest. *Amen, and Amen.*

With this faith review thy mercies. Consider, O my soul, what a good God has done for thee, and what greater things he has still in store. He has in some measure reconciled thee to his cross. Thou art convinced, it is thy Father's appointment, contrived for the best by his infinite love, and settled on thee for thy richest portion in time—He sends it for the trial of thy faith, that it may be found unto praise and honor and glory—for the exercise and for the improvement of thy patience—for the mortifying of the body of sin, and for the deadening of the life of sense. This is the will of thy most loving and tender Father. He sends the cross to be the means of these blessings. Certainly then it cannot hinder thy walk with him, but in all these respects will tend to keep thee in the way, and to help thee forward in it, and thus

Fourthly, It will assist and promote thy holy fellowship and communion with God. This is the principal thing in religion. We fell from God by sin, and it is the greatest mercy to be brought back to him again. In this point all

religions

religions fall, but the christian. Christ is the way. No one cometh to the Father, but by him: for there is salvation in no other. He only can forgive sin: he only can justify sinners. And this way was contrived in the covenant of the Trinity for the highest display of their divine perfections: Which begin to be manifested, when the Spirit of life enters into the sinner, and quickens him; when the Spirit of adoption enables him to trust in the atonement and obedience of Immanuel, and thereby to see God reconciled, and to call him, Abba, Father. With this faith in Jesus he expects from the Father's love all his promised mercies. Thus he has fellowship with the Father and the Son by the holy Spirit. He stands related to the eternal Three in their covenant offices, and he receives freely in believing the covenant blessings of each.

Among these blessings the cross is not the least: for it is mercifully appointed to be the means of bringing sinners to this divine fellowship. They go on stubbornly after their own hearts, and in the error of their own ways, until the Lord send some trouble to stop them. They look wishfully at the gilded cup of pleasure, and drink greedily of its sweets without any fear of the deadly poison mixed up with it. But when God convinces of sin, then come sorrow: they feel the poison working in a sense of guilt, and dread of punishment, which teach the want of a saviour, and
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are a good schoolmaster to bring them unto Christ. So God dealt with the chief of the Old Testament sinners—a giant in iniquity, who surpassed all that were before him in Jerusalem for idolatry and blood shedding. The Lord sent his prophets to warn him of his guilt, but he would not hearken. He hardened his heart, till the Lord brought upon him the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon: And when he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him, and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom: then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God. His case was not singular. It is a common thing with the Lord to send affliction to make sin bitter, that he may lead his people to true sorrow for it, and that they may seek until they find salvation. And, when they have found it, he still uses the cross to keep them near unto himself. Indeed the cross alone has not this effect, but rather the contrary. The natural man has his fretfulness stirred up by suffering, and cannot help murmuring at the will of God. But grace sanctifies suffering. God makes it a blessing to his children,

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as by it he exercises their faith in such general promises, as these.

If God send great and many troubles, they shall not separate believers from him: because he will then be with them; as he spake unto Israel—"Fear not to go down into Egypt, for
" I will there make of thee a great nation, I
" will go down with thee into Egypt." It was the house of bondage, in which the task-masters heavily afflicted his descendents with their burdens, but the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. So it was with the Israel of God. They need not fear any affliction: for their God has promised to be with them in it, and by it to make them great christians; the more they are afflicted the more shall their graces multiply and grow—"I will be with
" thee in trouble, says God--I will redeem, I
" will save thee from all thy troubles--many are
" the troubles of the righteous, but I will deliver thee out of them all--yea, when thou
" passest through the water, and through the
" fire, I will be with thee, and will preserve
" thee from all evil--I will make all these things
" work together for thy good." These promises are a great support to faith: for God engages to be with his children in every affliction. He does not intend that any should separate them from him, but that all should keep them near to
himself.

himself. He says he will be with them; they therefore expect his presence, and if their afflictions be very great, they may on good grounds wait for his time of deliverance. And as his word cannot be broken, their trust in it will be confirmed, and their hearts will be established in waiting upon the Lord. If their afflictions continue long he is with them all the time, making them sensible of their own weakness, and putting forth his promised strength, both that they may endure, and may also persevere in enduring: thus he improves their patience. And because they have still a carnal nature, which cannot bear the cross, God therefore keeps it upon them, in order to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, that as they die unto sin they may live unto righteousness. Such is the declared purpose of God in afflicting his children: he would hereby cherish these graces in them, by which communion with him is kept up; and as these grow, communion with him will grow in proportion. Faith will look more at the truth, and live more upon the faithfulness of God. Patience will depend more on his arm, and the less happiness the believer can find in the creature, he will seek and will find the more in his God. The mortifying of the old man will of course make the new man more alive: for as the power of the cross of Christ is laid upon the
former,

former, the power of the life of Christ will be experienced in the latter.

But such is the goodness of God to his children under the cross, that he has given them several very particular and express promises, in order to strengthen their faith and patience. He has shewn them what fellowship they are to expect with the eternal Three in their covenant offices; for promoting which he most mercifully provided the cross. O my soul, attend to this: carefully survey this rich contrivance of divine love, and when the cross is sent, take it up in faith, and expect to be a partaker of its covenant blessings.

Remember, it is laid upon thee to promote communion with thy God and Saviour. The appointed trial comes. It is to give thee proof of the soundness of thy faith in Jesus, and to let thee see by experience, that thou hast not believed in vain. Thou hast fled to him for refuge, from sin and guilt, from wrath and hell; He took thee into his protection; and now thy safety in him is to be attacked. It will be seen, that the foundation upon which thou standest will bear thee up in an hour of temptation. If thou hast indeed fellowship with him in his glorious salvation, it will now be made manifest to thy great profit. The cross is laid upon thee, an heavy, a bitter cross: it deprives thee of all
sensible

sensible comfort ; and is kept upon thee till thou hast no prospect of any. Hope in creature-comfort is failed. This is a sweet season for spiritual communion with thy Jesus. He has deadened the enjoyment of other things, that thy heart might be happier in him ; therefore now thou art to bring the principles, laid down in the former chapters, into practice. Here is a fair opportunity to make use of them : for without them a man must sink under such a cross ; but through faith in the righteousness of thy God and Saviour thou wilt not only have powerful arguments, but wilt also have powerful grace, to bear thy sufferings, patient under them, and thankful for them :

Under them thou wilt be tried—Is it good ground, upon which I have built my hope of salvation ? Is it the rock of ages ? Does it bear me up safe, and keep me unshaken in this time of trouble ? Yes, blessings, eternal blessings on my precious Jesus : I have fled to him for refuge, and he has set my feet upon a rock, that can never be moved : Christ my passover is sacrificed for me : in the blood of sprinkling I have put my trust, and I am safe from the destroyer : he is my propitiation, in whom I have redemption through faith in his blood : He is mine advocate also with the Father, standing in his presence as my surety : while the Father sees him and loves him, he will see me in him and love me with

the same love: Jesus is mine atonement with him, my righteousness, my sanctification, and my full redemption. O thou most lovely loving Jesus; I have often been happy in the sense of mine interest in thee, but never so happy as now. This cross is sanctified indeed: for it has removed what hindered my communion with thee, and has brought me to seek thy presence, and to enjoy thy supports, and thy comforts. I was foolish enough to wish it might pass from me; but this was mine infirmity. Pardon it my sweet Jesus, and accept mine unfeigned thanks for thy late mercies. Never in my life did I find the virtue of thy sacrifice in the peace of my conscience, nor had I such intimate communion with thee in thy finished salvation, as I have had under this cross. It tried me indeed, but the trial was to thy glory, and to my profit. I am now more satisfied than ever, that thy salvation is infinitely perfect, and that I have my share in it: I have it indeed now: for I am a partaker of the things which accompany salvation. I am making use of them—I find their reality—I enjoy their sweetness—blessing and thanks and praise without ceasing be unto thee, my adorable God and Saviour.

Is it not, O my soul, thy fervent prayer, that thou mayest live in holy friendship with Jesus? Why then dost thou fear his cross, which is his appointed way and means of improving thine intimacy

intimacy with him, and likeness to him? O study the discovery of his love in the scriptures: and take particular notice of the promises, which he has made to his suffering brethren. Read, mark them, mix faith with them, that they may be fulfilled in thine experience. Remember, thou canst not suffer, but by his will, to which he expects submission: he sends the cross to teach thee this lesson. It cannot hurt thee, if thou dost not quarrel with it: but if thy will be resigned to his, herein thou wilt have fellowship with him; and thou wilt have reason constantly to be praying to him--Not my will, Lord, but thine be done.

Consider, for the improvement of this fellowship, that thy Lord himself was exercised with the cross. He has gone before thee bearing it. He has taken the curse and wrath out of it, and has sanctified it to all his followers. In faith they must take it up, and in patience carry it, or they will not come to the kingdom. Certainly then their crucified Lord will be with them: yea, he has promised--"I will be with thee in trouble"--seek his presence, O my soul, under the cross--wait for communion with him--he has said he will be with thee: expect therefore the light of his countenance, which is better than life. Do not fear the cross, since it is to bring thee such a blessing: it is to be the means of thy fellowship with Jesus in his sensible

Support, and heavenly comfort ; take it up then. Suppose it removes all thine earthly joy. Let it go. The pain of its loss is not to be compared with the joy of thy spirit. Jesus will give thee pure holy joy, and by his divine art will extract it out of pain. He afflicts, that he may comfort. He takes away sensual, that he may give spiritual pleasure. He removes creature-love, that he may communicate more of this happy love. In mercy he chastises. He sees there is need to mortify sin. He sends the cross for this purpose, and blesses what he sends. It works like wholesome physic. But oh ! it is bitter, it is nauseous to the taste. Why do you chew it then ? Swallow the pill. The benefit is not to be found in the mouth, but in the stomach. There it will purge bad humors. The sovereign physician intends it should operate upon every evil temper, which would hinder your blessed communion with him, and should be the means of exercising those graces, by which that communion is maintained and may be improved.

Such is the cross of Christ—taken up in faith, and carried in patience, it promotes daily fellowship with him ; which is the greatest blessing upon earth. There is no greater in heaven : only they enjoy it by sense, and we by faith. But we have the same fellowship with them in Jesus, and the same communion with them in the graces of his salvation. And for these he
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makes way by his cross. He deadens the soul to the life of sense, that it may feel more of happiness in him. When he has withdrawn other joys, he often shines into the heart with joy unspeakable. He generally vouchsafes these his love tokens to his suffering brethren, and gives his richest cordials in their deepest distress. Each of such happy souls can say--It is good for me to suffer with Jesus. Yes, Lord: I am thy witness: thy cross is good: it has been the means of my greatest good: for thou hast brought me by it to forsake communion with other objects, and to enjoy communion with thee in thy precious love. If thou hast been pleased to take away any of my beloved objects, thou hast in much mercy supplied their place with thy presence. I have found my losses my chief gain. O my Jesus, Lord God almighty, I bless thee and adore thee for the distinguishing grace vouchsafed to me under the cross. It was entirely from thee, and the effect of thy love, that I had any patience, or any fellowship with thee in the way of suffering. It was thy doing, and I glorify thee for enabling me to maintain peace with the Father through faith in thine obedience unto death, and for satisfying me that my crosses were appointed and sent by covenant love. Thou art the giver of these blessings, and on thee I wait for the continuance of them. Whatever thou callest upon me to suffer, order it and me,

as seemeth best to thy godly wisdom; but leave me not to myself. Be always with me, my good Lord, that I may bear thy cross, and carry it patiently and profitably, thou sustaining both me and it every step of my way to heaven. Hear me, my Jesus, and answer: for without thee I can do nothing; but strengthened by thee I shall be able to bear all things, and my daily cross will keep me in daily communion with thee to my profit and to thine eternal praise. *Amen.*

Thus the cross of Christ is sanctified, and keeps up communion with him in the blessings of his salvation. So it does with the Father in his love. In the covenant his name is expressive of his office. He is a Father, who has every holy affection and feeling of love. He embraces in the bowels of the tenderest parent all his family—Christ the head, and all the members of his body, the church. With one undivided love his heart is set upon Christ and them, and with the same bountiful hand he blesses him and them. What Christ is, they shall be. In this most gracious relation he stands to the whole household of faith. He is their Father, who loves and accepts them, pardons, justifies, sanctifies, and blesses them with all spiritual and eternal blessings in Christ Jesus.

It is hard to believe this under the cross. To cleave to him in love, as our Father, when his hand is lifted up to smite, yea when we smart under his rod, then to see love in his heart and

love guiding his hand, is faith very triumphant. We are apt to look upon our sufferings as coming from the wrath of God. We think he must be displeased, or else he would not delight to put us to pain: upon this account we are not reconciled to the cross, but would shake it off, if we could. The scripture gives us a different view of this matter, and represents God in a more amiable light, even in the severest chastisement of his children. He is their Father, and they are his sons. This relation cannot subsist without his chastening them. He informs them of the necessity of it; he declares to them his purpose and grace before the chastening, and he assigns the motives and ends of his proceeding. He has always the same Father's love, and is always dealing with them as with sons. His cross is one of the chief marks of it. He sends it with a message of love, and it comes to them big with mercies. When the Father intends an abundant communication of his love, he generally makes way for it by some heavy cross, and when he would continue, or increase his favors, he keeps the cross upon them. It is his appointed means of promoting fellowship with him in the graces and blessings of his fatherly love. And it answers this end, when it is received by faith, and carried by patience: for then the believer, resting on the sure foundation laid for him in the holy life and death

death of Immanuel, sees the Father reconciled, and expects every promised blessing from his love. Whatever cross comes, he receives it from his Father in Jesus. He holds fast this truth—God is my God—he loves me perfectly in his Son, and therefore I shall find some proof of his fatherly love in this affliction. But if his faith be weak, if he forget, or forsake for a time his foundation, then the cross will become intolerable. Murmuring will arise. The flesh will hearken to unbelief. Fretfulness will take place, and thus God will be robbed of his glory, and the believer of his comfort. It has pleased God therefore, in order to strengthen his children's faith against these attacks, to give them many plain declarations of his invariable intention to do them good in all their afflictions. The Son is a witness for him; he was in the bosom of the Father, and knew all the purposes of his heart. He has given us a most delightful account of the Father's design in afflicting his children—"I am," says he to his disciples, the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman: every branch that beareth not fruit in me, he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit, HE PURGETH IT, THAT IT MAY BRING FORTH MORE FRUIT." The Father looks upon all his children, as one with Christ; as much united to him, and in him, as the branches are in the vine, therefore as a wise husbandman he takes the special

cial charge and care of them. Every branch that does not bear fruit in Christ—it is not as we read it, every branch in me, but every branch that does not bear fruit IN ME—whatever it may seem to be—in profession, a branch—in shew, a fruitful branch, yet it has no life; it was never cut off from the old dead stock, nor grafted into me the life-giving vine. The husbandman knows this well. Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. He does this in an hour of trial. Then it appears, that such branches were only in appearance united to the vine: for if he had made them part of it, he would no doubt have continued them in it, but he took them away that they might be manifest, that they were not one with the vine. This is a great part of the vine-dresser's business—he suffers no rotten branches upon his vine. He goes over his charge and attends to every branch. If any seem to men, or to themselves to be in the vine: for hypocrites are great self-deceivers, and the self-righteous love to be deceived, and proud nature is fond of growing into Christ by something of its own, the vine-dresser in due time discovers their mistake, and manifests to the world that they were not branches of his grafting: for he *taketh them away*: but every branch, says Christ, that beareth fruit by its communion with me, he *pureth*: by his divine husbandry he removes every thing, which would

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stop its growth and hinder its fruitfulness. The branches of the vine are so weak that they always want a prop—he supports them. They often run very luxuriant—he cuts them with his pruning knife. They have many bad humors and juices in them—those he corrects. He purges every noxious quality, and whatever is contrary to the holy nature of the heavenly vine he subdues. Most merciful is his purpose herein. He would have the branches of his own grafting to be lively and flourishing—like the stock upon which they grow. I am the vine, says Christ, ye are the branches. God's husbandry is to make the branches like the vine; therefore he purgeth them, in order *that they may bring forth much fruit*. And is this his design? Does he afflict them entirely for their good? Does he send every trial and trouble to purge their corruptions and to quicken their graces? Has the Lord Jesus given us such a pleasing view of his Father's love, assuring us that all crosses are sent by him to make us more lively and more fruitful? Since this is the case, what great reason hast thou, O my soul, to expect these blessings from the cross? Here is a promise for thy faith to rest on. A promise, which discovers the heart of thy Father, and his abundant love in afflicting thee. He would have thee not only to believe in his love, but also to enjoy it. He afflicts thee; but it is in order to thy keeping up communion with him under the
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cross,

cross, and he knows it is the best means of keeping it up and of promoting it. O seek then by faith for the promised fruit. Expect in patience the rich harvest. And that thou mayest quietly submit to the Father's will in purging thee, as a branch, observe how exactly the apostle Paul agrees with his blessed Master—"Furthermore
" we have had fathers of our flesh, who corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we
" not much rather be in subjection unto the
" Father of spirits, and live? For they verily
" for a few days corrected us, after their own
" pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might
" be PARTAKERS OF HIS HOLINESS." There is a reverence due to earthly parents, and children are required to submit to their correction; although herein they often consult their own will and pleasure more than their children's profit. And is not greater reverence due to the Father of our spirits, and shall not we submit to his corrections? Especially since his design in them is to promote the greatest dignity and highest happiness of his children, even to make them partakers of his holiness: For to *partake* is not only to give them a title to, but also to give them possession of, to communicate, to have fellowship with him, to share with him, in his *holiness*. Holiness is the Father's image in his children, by which he makes them like him, and capable of enjoying him. He chose them in Christ before
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the foundation of the world, that they should be holy. He chose them in Christ, and made Christ their sanctification. In him they partake, as branches in the vine, of his holy nature. They are one with him in righteousness and true holiness. He is the divine root, from which all the branches by the influence of the holy Spirit derive their nourishment and growth. From him is their fruit found. And the heavenly husbandman purposing to make the branches very fruitful, has provided effectual means. Among which the chief is his fatherly correction. This he sends to all his children, and in the tenderest love. He would have them to bring forth much fruit, that herein he may be glorified—holy fruit, produced by his care and culture, and ripened by daily communications of his grace. Therefore he appoints many heavy trials and crosses, by which he designs to bring them not only to believe in his love, but also to a growing enjoyment of it. He would communicate to them an increase of its blessings. He would have them nearer to himself and more like to himself—Holy *as* he is holy—not in degree, but in likeness. He would teach them more submission to his will, for which he wisely and mercifully suits the cross. He would improve their love to him, which he does by manifesting his to them: therefore he sends his cross to deaden their hearts to other love, that he may give them a happier sense of his.

his. And his children have found suffering times blessed times. They never had such nearness to their Father, such holy freedom with him, and such heavenly refreshments from him, as under the cross. It only took away what stopt the increase of this happiness, which thereby was made more spiritual and exalted. The cross thus sanctified is the greatest blessing on this side of heaven. Because by it the Father keeps his children in the closest communion, that they have with him upon earth; by it he purges them, makes them fruitful, and partakers of his holiness; by it he crucifies the life of sense, deadens them to the world, mortifies their lusts and passions, and by it as the outward man perissheth the inward man is renewed day by day. Most blessed renewal! Daily the Father communicates, and by means of the cross, new life, new strength, and new comfort to the inward man. By the right spirit renewed within him he learns the necessity of the daily cross--he sees the merciful appointment of it to teach resignation to the Father's holy will, to work a conformity to the first-born among many brethren both in suffering and by suffering, to bring in sensible experience of the Father's support and comfort. What blessings are these? how great! how precious! To be branches in the vine, and to have the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ the husbandman, who grafts them into him---O what an infinite

finite mercy is this ! and to be under his special care, faithfully watched over in order to remove every thing hurtful, and to bestow every thing useful, this love passeth understanding : And to have this love to feast upon in the absence of other comforts, to have them taken away only to make room for this, to enjoy this most plentifully, even under troubles and afflictions, and to be only purged by them in order to bring forth much fruit ; these are triumphs of divine love. O my God and Father, I confess and deplore my frequent mistaking thy dealings with me. I did not see they were all in love. Through mine ignorance and self-will I thought thy cross was a punishment, and I used wickedly to despise the chastening of the Lord. Pardon thy servant concerning this thing. Forgive mine opposition to thy cross, and subdue mine impatient desire to shake it off. Holy Father, mortify my will, and make it bow to thine. Thy will be done in me, and by me. Purge me, and make me fruitful under the cross. Chasten me, that I may be a partaker of thy holiness. I bless thee, O my God, for the desire which I have to keep up communion with thee in my sufferings : I believe thou art my perfectly reconciled Father in Jesus, and therefore trusting to thy love in him, I would take up thy cross and expect under it thy covenant blessings. Yes, Lord. This is of grace. Thine be the praise for shewing me the need of suffering,

suffering, and of renewing me by it in the inward man to a conformity to thy holy will. I now see thy love herein. It is as much love to crucify the outward man as to renew the inward man. I believe it in my judgment, O blessed God, let me experience it in my heart and walk. Order all my crosses, that they may work together under thee for thy glory and for my good: And if afflictions abound, let consolations abound, also. I have thy promise, and I rely upon it. Let it be fulfilled unto thy servant for thy dear Son's sake. *Amen, and Amen.*

This blessed communion with the Father and the Son, which the sanctified use of the cross is made the means of promoting, is maintained by the holy Spirit: He is a person in the Godhead co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and with the Son. It is his office to apply and to make effectual all covenant blessings. Faith in the Son, and thro' him love to the Father, are from his influence. He is the Lord and giver of all spiritual life, and of every spiritual enjoyment: For so the apostle teaches in his prayer for the Corinthians—The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the communion of the holy Ghost be with you all. This communion of the Holy Ghost consisted in partaking by his means with the Lord Jesus Christ in his grace, and with the Father in his love. The holy Ghost made the application. He quickened the soul, and inspired the breath of life into it,

it, and on him it depends for every spiritual act, as much as the life of the body does on its breathing. Whoever stedfastly believes in Jesus under the cross, and experiences under it the Father's love, has this fellowship with the Father and the Son by the operation of the holy Spirit: Therefore that sweet grace, which bears up with faith in Jesus, and with patience under the Father's rod, is said to be from him—"The fruit of the Spirit is *long-suffering*"—He enables the soul to wait quietly. And if the time be long and the suffering hard, he gives long patience. He does not take away the sense of pain, but he bestows strength to bear it, and by it he produces a plentiful harvest of graces and blessings. Thus he teaches us himself—"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, unto them who are exercised thereby"—These are the fruits of the Spirit: They are all of his producing. And they are fruits of righteousness, which none can produce but those, who are one with Christ; and in him righteous before God. Although sense cannot perceive, how they should grow or ripen upon the cross of Christ, yet faith can. The promise is sure. And waiting faith, exercised with suffering, finds many promised fruits. O my soul, consider this precious scripture, and with close attention.

attention. Study it. Treasure it up in thy heart. It contains a rich cordial for the afflicted. Observe there is love in sending the cross, love to be manifested by it, and heavenly fruits of love to grow upon it. Why then is suffering so hard? Why art thou so little profited by it? Is it not generally barren, because thou art not looking to the word of promise, and depending upon the holy Spirit to give thee the promised fruit? Ask thyself therefore, especially in the hour of suffering—Am I now expecting the communion of the Holy Ghost, that by his grace I may partake with the Son in his salvation, and with the Father in his love? Is this my present experience? There is no bearing the cross without it. Art thou then, O my soul, trusting to him for this happy fellowship, and hoping that as thou art a branch in the vine, and the husbandman is now purging thee, thou mayest bring forth much fruit? And observe, what kind of fruit it is. All the effects of being in union with Christ, and of having communion with him are called *fruits of righteousness*. Christ is the vine. The branch must be one with him before it can live and grow—one with him in his life and death—a partaker of his divine righteousness—and then the branch abiding in him by the influence of the Holy Spirit will be made fruitful in love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: For the fruit of the

Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth. He brings forth all the fruit, that is to the glory of God—And it is all *peaceable* fruit: for it is produced by him in consequence of covenant-love, by which the Father is revealed as the God of peace, and the Son as the great peace-maker, and when the holy Spirit enables the poor sinner to believe this, then he gives him joy and peace in believing—being justified by faith he has peace with God through Jesus Christ. The cross soon comes after this—not to destroy, but to try this faith—not to take away, but to confirm this peace—it is sent to give proof of the soundness of faith, and to manifest the sweetness of divine love: for it comes from the God of peace, and all the fruits which he intends to produce by it are *peaceable*, such as should increase the happy sense of peace in the minds of his children. And for this purpose the holy Spirit abides with them. He has revealed the Father's love in scripture, and he is a faithful witness of it to their hearts. He sheds it abroad and satisfies them of it. Yea he gives them sensible experience and enjoyment of it under the cross. This produces a quiet submission to his will, and an humble dependence upon his power: Which are manifested by waiting upon God in all ways and means for the grace promised to his afflicted children. The cross requires great grace, and therefore calls forth much prayer.

prayer. Suffering times are praying times. The cross brings sinners upon their knees--Mannasseh in affliction entreated the Lord--So did Paul--Behold, he prayeth. It keeps believers upon their knees, as the prophet witnesses--"Lord, "in trouble have they visited thee, they poured "out a prayer when thy chastening was upon "them." The Lord himself declares the same--"I will go and return to my place, till they "acknowledge their offence, and seek my face; "in their affliction they will seek me early." Accordingly they did seek him--"Come, say "they, and let us return unto the Lord: for "he hath torn and he will heal us, he hath "smitten, and he will bind us up." O blessed fruit of affliction! when sanctified by the Spirit it teaches the children of God to pray fervently, and to continue instant in prayer: It discovers the weakness of the flesh, and the rebellion of the will, and shews the necessity of drawing near to God for strength and patience. It keeps the mind in a praying frame, expecting by the grace of the Spirit communion with the Father and the Son. The cross makes this communion necessary. It cannot be endured without a belief of the Father's love in Jesus, and therefore the Spirit of prayer keeps this belief in exercise, and enables the soul to plead the promise of strength to endure patiently, and to bring forth much fruit. The promise cannot fail. They who trust

in it cannot be disappointed ; but shall find grace to help in time of need. As prayer is thus necessary, so the holy Spirit generally makes it sweet under the cross. Is any afflicted among you ? Let him pray. Prayer is the appointed means of his comfort. If affliction send him to God, God will meet him, and make him joyful in his house of prayer. How encouraging are these words ?—" Draw nigh to God, and he " will draw nigh to you." In every case of distress, draw nigh in faith to God : He is a very present help. Seek his face, and you will find him near unto you : For the Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, nigh to hear, to answer, and to comfort. Thus his promise runs—" Then " shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer, " thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am" --What is your burden ? I am present to give strength to bear it. What is your grief ? Here are my comforts--Do your tribulations abound ? Here are my consolations abounding also. Here I am--Ask what you will believing, and it shall be done unto you. O what times of refreshing are these ? The holy Ghost sensibly comforts the afflicted. When they draw nigh to God, he is present to make their hearts joyful. He dispels their darkness with the light of his countenance, and turns their mourning into joy. And thus they have not only communion with God in prayer, but also such communications of his heavenly

heavenly love, that they can often say, It is good for us that we have been in trouble.

In times of trouble the word also is generally sweet. All people in distress look out for some comfort: And the holy Spirit directs believers to the scriptures. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." The afflicted feel their want of patience and comfort, which puts them upon careful hearing and reading of the good word of God. They want to know what it says of their case, and when they meet a suitable promise, then they have a ground of hope. Their present trials require them to seek for something more than the truth of the promise. This being credited, they therefore expect the promised blessing. When the famine was in Canaan, Jacob and his family could not have been kept alive by believing there was corn in Egypt: They must either fetch it or die. Trouble calls for the experience of the promised blessings, and when they are received at such a time they are sweet indeed. They feel, as ease does after pain. When the holy Spirit applies the comfort, the promise, by which he applies it, is precious. It is like a reviving cordial to a fainting heart. O how sweet are thy words unto my taste, yea sweeter than honey unto my mouth. Honey is sweet: But the

the word is sweeter. When through patience and comfort of the scriptures the afflicted believer enjoys the good of the promise, then he can say—Now I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me: Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort according to thy word unto thy servant.

Sweet is the comfort which the afflicted receive from God the Comforter under the cross: not only *in* suffering, but also *after* it. AFTERWARD also “it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of “righteousness.” He, who carries the cross of Christ does not labor in vain, and spend his strength for nought; but he is bearing forth good seed. If he sow it in tears, yet he shall reap in joy. The Lord looks at the fruit, and intends to bring forth much of it by the cross: We are apt to look at the suffering, and to forget the fruit. He has the end in view in the use of all means; and the holy Spirit has revealed this clearly, that we might depend upon him for receiving the proper fruit of affliction. The Lord says, he led his people through the great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery flying serpents and scorpions, and drought; that he might humble them, and that he might prove them, to do them good AT THE LATTER END. He intended to do them good. This was first in his heart. Then the way in which he would
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do it: he would lead them through many afflictions: by which they should find *at the latter end*, how good God was to them. The promise of this was their encouragement to bear the cross, till they reaped the fruit. In like manner the Lord says to the afflicted Jews—"I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you AN EXPECTED END"—such an end as you would wish, and having my promise, such as you may safely hope for—my thoughts indeed are not as your thoughts—you think I have cast you off, and that your present cross is to crush you—no, I mean to do you good by it—and so the end will prove—wait a little in faith, and all will come to an happy issue.

Are these scriptures the truth of God? Has the eternal Spirit promised in them, that although the bearing of the cross be very painful, yet it is very profitable? Will he afterwards cause them to bring forth much fruit, who have been exercised with it? Art thou then waiting, O my soul, under all thy troubles for the promised end? Dost thou expect it, and in patience tarry the Lord's leisure. Canst thou look back, and see how merciful the dealings of thy God have been—how gracious his rod—how loving his correction? Canst thou look forward under every cross, persuaded, that God will do thee good at the latter end? That he will cause many peace-
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able fruits to grow upon this seemingly barren tree? Yea, that these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, shall work for thee an eternal weight of glory, far more excellent than can be conceived? O God the holy Ghost, I do believe it: I would not doubt of the truth of the promise in thy word, nor of the truth of thy grace in my heart: I therefore beseech thee, O thou Spirit Jehovah, to enable me to keep up communion with thee in all my trials, that I may bring forth those peaceable fruits of righteousness. Thou art the giver of every grace. I acknowledge thee to be the author of my spiritual life: I was dead in trespasses and sins, and thou hast quickened me. It is of thy mere gift that I have any faith, and that upon the trial it was found to be true faith: I bless thee for this grace, and humbly pray for the continuance and for the increase of it. Meet me in the use of all means, and enable me to grow in faith, rooted and grounded in Christ Jesus, that I may also grow in love to his Father and to my Father. O thou divine revealer of his heavenly love, shed it abroad more abundantly in my heart, that I may learn more resignation to his will, more subjection to his authority, and more submission to his rod. I acknowledge thee, O holy making Spirit to be the teacher of patience, and what I have learnt was thy revelation. It was in thy strength that I was enabled to go on with any quietness bearing

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ing my cross. Thy grace made me willing, and nothing else can keep me willing, to have the flesh crucified with its affections and lusts. O God put forth thine almighty power, and enable me to part with every thing, which would hinder my fellowship with the Father and the Son. I desire so to walk this day, as to have growing fellowship with the eternal Three, and I desire it through thine influence. O God the Holy Ghost, carry on thy work. Exalt and purify my faith and patience, and every grace: if it be thy will to do this under the cross, O make me willing and able to bear it. Let every cross bring forth richer and riper fruit, until thou give me an exceeding great and eternal harvest of glory. I ask this in the name of Jesus, and I expect an answer of grace through the Father's love in him, to whom with thee, O blessed Spirit, three persons in one Godhead be equal glory, worship, and praise, now, and for ever. Amen.

Meditate, O my soul, with seriousness upon this great subject. Study the scripture account of the cross. The knowledge of it enters into the very essence of the peace and comfort of thy walk. Thou canst not run away from the cross: thou canst not cast it off: remember, if thou wilt be Christ's disciple, thou must take it up daily and follow him. If it be very heavy and very grievous, yet it will not hinder thee from

from following him. He carried the heaviest part for thee—he endured the curse and punishment due to thy sins—he left no wrath for thee to suffer—Blessed be his love, the cross has no curse in it now—thy sufferings are all sent from love—and his love will help thee to bear them and to profit by them: for he has promised to bless and sanctify them to his people. And he makes them a blessing indeed. Never on this side of heaven does he give them such near and happy communion with himself as under the cross. O read then, and study what is revealed in scripture concerning it. Go over it again and again. Learn well, and inwardly digest the doctrine of the cross of Christ—the necessity—the benefit—the blessings of it. Meditate and feed upon the sweet promises relating to it: mix faith with them, that they may nourish and strengthen thee in time of need. But never forget, that thy cross, be it what it will, is appointed for thee in covenant love. It is the portion allotted thee by thy heavenly Father—decreed in weight and measure, to an atom—thou shalt not bear it one moment longer, than he has determined—and many precious fruits it shall produce. Thou wilt find suffering times growing times—growth in faith and patience, in mortification to sin, and in fellowship with the ever blessed Trinity. The author of thy faith puts it to the trial: it comes out of the lion's den

den unhurt: it comes out of the fiery furnace refined. God is glorified hereby, and thou art strengthened. He sends the cross to teach thee patience, and he continues it for the exercise and for the improvement of the same grace. He intends by his chastening to crucify the flesh, and to mortify thy members which are upon the earth. In love he takes away sensual, that he may give thee spiritual joys. He does not hate thee, but love guides every stroke of his chastening. He is only weakening thine attachment to earthly things, that he may increase thy communion with Father, Son, and Spirit. O what blessings are these! Meditate, O my soul, much and often upon them. Pray for the experience of them in time of need: and be assured with all these helps, the cross will be exercise hard enough for thy patience. Thou canst carry it only in the strength of almighty grace. May the Lord strengthen thee from day to day to run the race set before thee, till thou win the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

*The believer exercised with the inward cross learns
to walk more humbly with his God.*

THE outward cross is not always a burden alike heavy. God gives his children a little respite. After they have been long tried he sometimes removes their trouble, and gives them ease and outward prosperity. Their sun arises as it does in nature. After many cold and dark days a fine season comes—finer for coming after them. The sky grows clear and serene, the air is soft and refreshing, the sun shines with warm and enlivening rays. Every thing looks pleasant, and smiles around you. So it is in the kingdom of grace. The believer may not be always in heaviness through manifold afflictions. He has his times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. He prospers and is in health. The blessing of God is upon his substance. Every thing that he takes in hand succeeds. He is happy in his circumstances, and happy in his family. He sees the goodness of God in these mercies, and he is thankful. But if the heavenly Father sometimes indulge his children with the removal of the outward cross, yet he never does with the inward. They carry it all their days, and

and an heavy burden it is. So long as they are in the body, while they are in this tabernacle, they do groan being burdened : for

The INWARD CROSS is the fault and corruption of sinful nature, which doth remain in the regenerate, and is their continual grief and plague : because it is always opposing their holy and happy walk with God. It is called in scripture

THE FLESH, the whole man being carnal, and full of lusting against the Spirit.

THE OLD MAN, being the first in us, before the new man is created by the Spirit of regeneration.

A BODY OF SIN, made up completely of members and appetites, in which there is not only an absence of all good, but also a propensity to all evil, infomuch that nothing can move or stir in this body, but what is sinful.

THE LAW OF SIN, because sin rules and governs the natural man.

INDWELLING SIN, because it dwells in the whole man, both in soul and body.

CONCUPISCENCE, OR LUST, which the apostle says, he should not have known to be sin, unless the law had said--Thou shalt not covet or lust.

This fallen nature is also said to be corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, to be contrary to the Spirit, to rebel against the law of God, and not to be subject to it, neither indeed can be. " This
" corruption

" corruption of nature doth remain, according
 " to our reformers, Art. 9. Yea in them that
 " are regenerated, whereby the lust of the flesh,
 " called in Greek, *froneema sarkos*, which some
 " do expound the wisdom, some sensuality, some
 " the affection, some the desire of the flesh, is
 " not subject to the law of God: and although
 " there is no condemnation for them, that be-
 " lieve and are baptised, yet the apostle doth
 " confess that concupiscence and lust hath of it-
 " self the nature of sin. And in the 15th Art.
 " of *Christ alone without sin*, they say, that all
 " we the rest, although baptised and born again
 " in Christ, yet offend in many things, and if we
 " say, we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and
 " the truth is not in us."

The compilers of our articles were holy men,
 and taught of God. They spake his mind and
 will according to the oracles of truth. And it
 will be a great comfort to a poor soldier, wearied
 with fighting against those lusts, which war
 against the soul, to find that the best Christians
 in every age have been engaged in the same holy
 war. This will mightily encourage him to take
 to him the whole armor of God, that he may be
 able to withstand in the evil day, and having
 done all to stand.

Attend then, O my soul, to the law and to the
 testimony. Pray for the spirit of wisdom and re-
 velation. Desire grace to submit to the truth of
 God,

God, that whatever he teaches plainly and expressly in his word, thou mayest believe it, and abide by it. Read and pray, till thou art satisfied, and the conviction of thy mind influence thy heart and walk. Art thou to carry the inward cross all the way to heaven? Is there no discharge in this war?—No truce to be made, not even a cessation of arms? But art thou to be fighting on the good fight of faith, till the captain of thy salvation take thee out of the field of battle? O hard service! To be night and day—at home and abroad—in the closet and in the church—at hearing the word and meditating upon it—fasting and praying—at the shop and at the exchange—every where and at all times forced to be in arms against the assaults of indwelling sin; this is a warfare terrible indeed to flesh and blood. The length of it—never ended so long as breath is in the body. The painfulness of it—consisting in being at war with a man's self; and in resisting his bosom sins and strongest appetites—What discouragements are these, from entering into, and from continuing in this battle? Why should it be wondered then, that some persons, who only follow the camp, and are not of it, should repent, when they see this war and return to Egypt? Or that others, pretending to be on Christ's side, but never one with him, should dream of shaking off this cross, and of sitting down here in a land of perfect peace? This is
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the coward's paradise. They want to rest quiet on this side of Jordan, and would not go over with Jesus to fight for the promised land. O dear Saviour, keep thy noble army from this delusion of Satan: So long as they are in the body of sin and death, make them good soldiers of Christ Jesus, resisting unto blood striving against sin. For so long must we be in this hot battle. It is decreed by the sovereign will of God--and he is always of one mind. He has revealed it in his word of truth, that the corruption of nature doth remain in his regenerate children, they have an old man and a new, they have flesh and spirit, they have nature and grace, and he has described the combat, which is to last through life between these two. The beloved apostle bears a clear testimony. He is speaking of those whom the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, and who had fellowship with the Father and with the Son, and who proved the truth of this by their walking in the light: He puts himself among them: and declares--"If we say, that we have no sin *now*, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us"--If we say--He saith not, If *thou* say, as if he spake of some particular person--Nor if *ye* say, as if he intended ordinary Christians alone--But if we apostles, or whatever we be say so, if any of us, If I, for instance, should think I had no sin now, who am a saint of an hundred years old: Because I was a

great favorite of the Lord Christ, and have been a great sufferer for him : Or because I have lived blameless before men, and have been a witness for the truth in my writings, and am ready to seal it with my blood : If upon account of any thing done by me, or in me, of any real excellency or attainment, I should fancy myself in a state of sinless perfection, the holy Ghost charges me with self-deceit. A dreadful delusion ! arising from the pride of my heart, and its rebellion against God, and discovering the most gross ignorance of God's righteousness in the holy law, and of Christ's righteousness in the glorious gospel : But if I was to say, as well as to think it ; if I should tell any body--Now I have no sin--I am perfect--Now, at this time, I have received perfect purity of heart : For ever since I received it, I have had nothing stirring in me for one year, for two, twenty, forty years, but love, pure love to God--God is in all my thoughts, and nothing but God--I do his will in earth, as it is done in heaven : If I should say so, I should tell a great lie : For I should deceive myself, and the truth would not be in me.

Are these indeed the very words of the apostle ? " If we say, that we have no sin now, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Can no other sense be fairly put upon them, but that the holy John had sin in him at every given moment of his life ? Is this the plain literal

meaning of the passage? As it certainly is, observe then, O my soul, the decisive evidence given here by the Holy Ghost concerning the inward cross. Pray for his teaching that thou mayest understand, and pray for his grace that thou mayest profit from, this scripture. Here is his infallible record concerning St. John and all highly favoured believers--He asserts, that there was no time of their lives, in which they were free from indwelling sin: God forbid then, that I should think I had no sin. He avers, that if they should say they had none, they were deceived, and that if they should stand to it, as popish mystics, and protestant perfectionists do, the searcher of hearts declares that they lie, and do not the truth--the truth is not in them: For the father of lies has flattered them and drawn them into self-idolatry, with a wicked design to corrupt their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ. Beware, O my soul, of this deceit: The holy Ghost has warned thee of it. He foresaw how the first sin would break out in after times, and pride would persuade men that they were perfect in the flesh, he therefore so guarded this scripture that none can mistake it, but such as turn away their ears from the truth. He put all the words in the present tense, lest any should think he was speaking of time past, or of what men were before the blood of Christ had cleansed them. If we now say--WE, who now have
fellowship

fellowship with the blessed Trinity, and are walking in the light of their countenance--say that WE HAVE NO SIN, nor had none formerly; he is not speaking of that: If he was, the Holy Ghost understands grammar; and can make no mistake in expressing himself, he would certainly have used the past tense, but he uses the present, NOW HAVE NO SIN, so as not to want the cleansing blood of Jesus this moment as much as ever--If we have any such thoughts WE NOW DECEIVE OURSELVES AND THE TRUTH IS NOT NOW IN US. How forcible and strong is this testimony from the mouth of John? And the sense, as well as the grammar shews, that he is speaking of believers, and that there is sin in them: For throughout the chapter he treats of the very same persons, and describes not what they were before, but what they are since they received the grace of God. They were cleansed from all sin by the blood of the Lamb, were admitted into communion with the Father and the Son by the Spirit, and they enjoyed this communion, walking in the light, as God is in the light--these are the persons here mentioned--of whom God says, they had sin still in them, indwelling sin, the fault and corruption of nature still remained in them, and if they fancied it did not, they would be sadly deceived--they would entirely mistake the covenant of grace, which was to bring sinners sensible of their wants and mis-

ries to live out of themselves upon the fulness of the God-man—they would forget their own character, under which alone they can be saved, salvation being only for sinners—they would fall into the crime of the devil, by pride exalting themselves against the person and work of the incarnate God—and they would quite pervert the law and the gospel: For in order to maintain their inherent perfection, they are forced to legalize the gospel, and to make it consist of certain terms and conditions, upon the performance of which sinners shall be saved, and then in order to comfort themselves with their having performed these terms and conditions, they are forced to turn rank Antimonians: They lessen the evil of sin, they excuse it in themselves, and make just nothing of it. They call it by several pretty soft names, such as infirmity, frailty, excrescence, and at last they get quite rid of it, by laying it upon the devil, and by terming it an injection of old satan. And thus they deceive themselves into perfection, and insist upon it that they have no sin, although they have enough in them to damn the whole world. O God, open the eyes of these self-deceivers, and bring them into the way of truth.

Such is the clear evidence of the holy Spirit: He asserts that the greatest believers, while in the body, have sin in them. Dost thou yield, O my soul, to his testimony? Art thou fully convinced

vinced of it from the work of his grace, as well as from the word of his truth? Dost thou feel indwelling sin? Is it the plague of thy heart, and the burden of thy life? When thou art willing to walk humbly with thy God, is it continually in thy way, raising objections, putting difficulties, and suggesting hindrances? Is it like a heavy weight pressing thee down in thy race, that thou canst not run so long, or so fast, as thou couldst wish? Since this is indeed thy daily cross, and the bearing of it the hardest part of thy warfare, O read with diligence the scripture account of it. Take notice of the Lord's champions, how they felt under this burden, from whence they derived strength to bear it, and had comfort under it. Hear the man after God's own heart crying out—"Mine iniquities are gone over my head, as a beavy burden, they are too heavy for me"—David had a heavy load: He was ready to sink, and he could not cast it off. He could not go into his closet, or to the house of God: He could not sit upon his throne, or go in and out before his family, but this grievous cross so bowed him down greatly, that he went mourning all the day long. The burden of it was intolerable, and would have crushed him under it; if he had not learned, how to cast it on the Lord—"Make haste, says he, to help me, O Lord God of my salvation." Here

Here he found relief. The prayer of faith was heard, and God was the strength of his salvation. Under the same burden a New Testament faint went groaning all his days. He had a hard conflict between the flesh and the spirit, and he has left the account of it upon record. Blessed be God for the seventh chapter of the Romans. We there read of the inward cross, with which all the children of God are exercised. In the very same Paul there was delight in the law of God after the inward man, but he found another law in his members, rebelling against the law of God--the flesh, in which dwelleth no good thing, never ceased to assault the spirit with its vile thoughts, legal workings, and rebellious inclinations--when he had a will to do good, he could not do it so perfectly, as he desired--his best moments were never free from the inroads of indwelling sin: therefore in the bitterness of his soul he cried out--"O wretched man that I am"--O! that sigh came from the bottom of his heart--I know what he felt--he groaned being burdened--weary and tired with this continual conflict he looked out for deliverance. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He saw by faith his almighty Saviour, and in him expected everlasting victory--"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." He rested upon Christ in the battle, and through him

him waited for deliverance, knowing that one day he should be made more than conqueror.

Well then, O my soul, here is comfort. If the corruption of nature be thy cross; so it was to David, and so it was to Paul. Thy case is not singular. It is common to every soldier who is fighting under the banner of Christ. This cross is unavoidable : because it is in thy bosom. It is thine inmost self--thy whole nature which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. Thou hast not an atom of thy body, nor the least motion or stirring of any faculty in thy soul, but sin is in it; and therefore it is capable of being a plague to the new man. The Holy Ghost speaks thus of the inward warfare--“ This I
“ say then; walk in the spirit, and ye shall not
“ fulfil the lusts of the flesh : for the flesh lusteth
“ against the spirit, and the spirit against the
“ flesh, and these are contrary the one to the
“ other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye
“ would.” These words are addressed to the Galatians, who were believers, and called into the liberty of the gospel, but by false teaching they were under a great temptation. They had begun in the spirit, but they thought of being perfected in the flesh. They set out with salvation by faith, but expected salvation at last by works. Among other arguments to convince them of their mistake here is one unanswerable, namely, No works of ours can save a sinner but
such

such as are perfect, no works of ours are perfect, therefore they cannot save a sinner. And that none of them are perfect is certain, because in every one of them there is something of the flesh, of corrupt nature as well as something of the spirit and of spiritual nature. These two are contrary as life and death, and they are always in action, every moment the one lusting against the other; so that no believer can do the things which he would, so perfectly as the holy law requires.

How grievous must this inward cross be to a real believer? For it consists in the opposition, which he finds within him, to God and to the things of God. The flesh ever lusteth against the spirit, the old man against the new. There is a continual war between these contrary powers. The flesh is a complete body of sin armed with every member and instrument of rebellion, that can resist the motions and actions of the new man. There is darkness in the understanding always clouding the light of the glorious gospel, and therefore we know but in part. The will of the flesh always opposes the holy will of God. There is enmity in the heart working against the love of God and of his will. There is pride to weaken humility--anger to oppose meekness--the carnal mind to fight against spiritual-mindedness. When the spirit is willing the flesh is weak. When you draw near to God in prayer, the imagination will not be confined: it will

will wander after a thousand vain objects. When you are hearing the word, it will disturb your attention with its unaccountable excursions. It is so sportive and flighty, that you cannot keep it within any bounds. Is it not so, O my soul? Art thou not sensible of this heavy cross? Dost thou not find something in thee always resisting and weakening the exercise of thy graces? and is not this the great plague of thy life? Can there be a greater, than to carry about with thee a sinful nature, daily trying to hinder thee in thy holy walk and happy communion with God? O how much does it concern thee then to be well skilled in bearing this cross, and in behaving under it as a good soldier of Christ Jesus! And to this end the principles before laid down are absolutely necessary. Without them thou canst not rightly understand the nature of indwelling sin, and canst not possibly gain victory over it. Only the doctrines of grace received into thy heart can enable thee to walk with God under this cross. Call to mind then what was agreed upon in the covenant of the Trinity, and was fulfilled in the person and work of Immanuel for thy peace with the Father, and for thy returning to him in love, and has been applied to thee by the holy Spirit, who has given thee faith in Jesus, and has manifested the love of the Father in him: thou art therefore now one with thy covenant-head—in him complete and perfect, although

although thou art in thyself still a sinner. Thou hast a body of sin, through the lusting of which thou art not able to keep the holy law according to its full demands in any one instance. But thou art before the Father, what thy surety is. He sees thee in him, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing—accepted as he is—beloved with the same love—looked upon with the same joy—and blessed with all spiritual blessings in him. Thy surety lived for thee : thou hast the righteousness of God for thy justification. Thy surety died for thee : in him thou art as truly dead unto sin, as Christ himself is. Thy surety rose again, and took possession of spiritual and eternal life for thee. He was delivered for thine offences, and raised again for thy justification. Thou shalt reign with him, as certainly as he has now the crown upon his own head. Such is the perfect salvation, which is for thee ; although thou art still the subject of sin : for thy pardon is without exception or reverse—All trespasses are freely forgiven. Thy justification to life is absolute : for it is God himself that justifieth. He chose thee in Jesus, that thou shouldst be holy and without blame before him—and so thou art. As a member in his body thou art without blemish. Here is thy relief under the inward cross. The Father chose thee in his Son, looks upon thee in him, and deals with thee according to covenant love : there is therefore now no condemnation to thee,

thee, who art in Christ Jesus. With the sweet sense of this upon thy conscience, persuaded that God is at peace with thee, take up the inward cross. In this delightful view see the curse removed. Thou hast no reason to fear wrath, or death, or hell. Victory over all sins and enemies is certain. Daily, eternal victory is promised. In this faith follow the noble army, who carried this cross to their graves. Fight as they did, looking unto Jesus, Sin is in thee: it was in them; but they looked upon it as a vanquished foe, slain, and put to death, when Jesus died for sin once. Likewise reckon thou also thyself to be in him dead unto sin--freed from the condemning sentence of the law--freed from the dreadful stroke of justice by his death--freed as truly as he is--and therefore thou art no more liable, than he is, to be condemned and punished. And for the strengthening of this faith, seek for fellowship with him in his death. It is thy privilege, as thou art planted in the likeness of his death to derive power and efficacy from it daily to put sin to death. The more steadfastly thou believest, that thou art one with him in his death, the more wilt thou find thy sinful nature crucified with him. Communion is always according to the faith of union with Christ. The strongest faith must have the strongest hold of him, and thereby draw the most virtue from him. It is true as our faith increases, we be-
come

come more spiritual; and we see corruption more, as we see motes in the sun beams. The senses of the new man by exercise gain a quicker perception of sin—we become all over tender as the eye—jealous of the motions—yea of the appearance of evil. This is real growth. Sin is more felt, in order that the power of Jesus may be put forth to make us hate it, resist it, and overcome it more. As believers are more sensible of their sinfulness in the first Adam, so they grow up into the second Adam the Lord from heaven: they bear the cross of the corruption of the first, which leads them to constant fellowship with the second—in his death, for the pardon of their corruption—in the power of his death to mortify sin, that it may not have dominion over them.

Corruption is in thee, and it will strive for dominion. Thy sins will sometimes fiercely assault. Their allies, the world and the devil, will join them with stratagems and force; when the battle is hot, and thou art weak, then it behoves thee to live by faith upon Jesus as thy surety, now acting for thee in heaven, as he acted for thee upon earth. He is gone up, as thy high priest, to carry thy name within the veil. He bears it upon the ephod on his shoulders, and upon the breast-plate on his heart: his power and his love are engaged for thee, now he is in glory. He stands in the presence of God, as thy

thy representative. The Father sees thee in him: and thou art in his sight what thy forerunner is. As he stands there, so dost thou stand—righteous as he is righteous—holy as he is holy—beloved as he is beloved—and shalt be blessed as he is blessed. View by faith thy nature in him, exalted and glorified, and for the joy set before thee in him take up thy cross. It is a heavy burden—it is a hard warfare. True. But consider, who shall lay any thing to thy charge for indwelling sin? It is God that justifieth thee from it. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for thee. He appears in the presence of God for thee, as thine intercessor. He is always in court to represent thy person, and to carry thy cause, especially as to what concerns sin. “If any of us sin, says the beloved disciple, we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins:” in this office he is skilful, and faithful, and compassionate. He has thine interest at heart—thy safety, thy comfort under this cross, and thy victory over it. His very glory is so interwoven with thine, that they are one: yea the advocate and his clients form but one spiritual body, of which every member is, what the head is. O my God and Saviour, I bless thee and worship thee for acting
for

for me as mine advocate and intercessor in heaven. Increase, I beseech thee my faith, that I may see more of the glory of thine office, and may make more use of it, in the bearing of mine inward crosses. O let thy faithful witness abide with me to enable me without doubt or wavering to trust in what thou hast done for me upon earth, and to draw comfort from what thou art now doing for me in heaven. Into thy hands I desire to commit my cause. Lord, undertake for me. Be surety for thy servant for good, and guide me with thy counsel, till thou bring me to thy glory. I ask this for thy mercies sake. *Amen.* Is this the true state of the case? Is it certain from the word of God? Is it confirmed from matter of fact? Did the highest believer upon earth experience this inward cross? When his conscience summoned him to the bar of God, and put him upon enquiring what he would plead there for his justification, had he any thing to urge but the sacrifice and righteousness of the ever blessed Immanuel? And is not this thy plea, O my soul? Dost not thou find so much weakness and infirmity in thy holy things, that thou wouldst seek atonement for the iniquity of them through the intercession of the great high priest? And thou wouldst not think of standing before the throne to claim eternal life as the reward due to thine own holiness. Is not this thine experience? If it be, then take up thy cross in this

FAITH. It is thy grief, that sin is in thee. The motions and lustings of it are thy burden. The resisting and opposing them is thy continual warfare. And thou hast no prospect before thee of enjoying perfect deliverance from this heavy cross, until death release thee. Blessed be God for the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. There is a provision made in the covenant of grace for the pardon of indwelling sin, for victory over it daily, and for the eternal destruction of the whole body of sin: It shall have no existence in the members, any more than it has in their glorified head. Here is a comfort for thee, O my soul, of God's own providing, and of God's own applying. When it is applied to thy heart, the cross will be easy. Observe carefully what is revealed concerning the being of sin in the best Christians, and concerning the pardon of it. The Holy Ghost declares, it dwells in them, but they are forgiven all trespasses—they are in Christ without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing—in the first Adam they are heirs of sin, death, and hell, in the second Adam the Lord from heaven they are heirs of righteousness, life and glory. He is their covenant-head: And they are before God, what he is. This is the record of truth—YE ARE COMPLETE IN HIM. Abide by it, O my soul. Give it full credit, and boldly plead it against all the charges of guilt, and fears of wrath—

“ It

“ It is true ; I have sin in me, but it is pardoned. God has forgiven me ALL trespasses. I stand before him in my surety, who undertook for me, and I am perfect in him. The Father chose me in his Son : He looks upon the face of his beloved, and sees me in him. In him he is well-pleased, so he is with me. As he loves him, so he loves me. This is the glorious privilege, which by faith I now enjoy. I deny sight and sense ; and I stick to the word of God. I adhere strictly to its testimony concerning me, believing myself to be dead indeed unto sin in Christ, and in him absolutely freed from guilt and condemnation. The Father is at peace with me ; and he loves me in his Son, and with the same love with which he loves him—His Father and my Father. With this persuasion I go to war with my corruptions. I see their traiterous designs. They are fighting against every thing that is dear and precious to my soul. But having the promised grace of the almighty Saviour for my help, I desire to set upon them in his name. I know he has them among mine other enemies under his feet, and I have his word for it that he will put them under mine. Yea, Lord I believe, and on thy faithful promise I trust this day. Although I must carry my cross, yet I bless thee and worship thee for removing curse and wrath from it : I can
“ now

“ now take it up as thy foldier and fight against
 “ it in thy strength, expecting victory from thee,
 “ and to thy glory. O my God, save me from
 “ indwelling sin. Let me feel it my burden.
 “ Glorify thy grace in me, and by me, that be-
 “ ing endued with power from on high I may
 “ hold out resisting and conquering it, till thou
 “ give me everlasting victory.”

If this, O my soul, be thy constant depen-
 dence, then the cross will become light. Guilt
 makes it heavy. The curse in it makes it into-
 lerable: but by faith thou canst see guilt and
 curse removed, then it will be no hindrance to
 thee in thy heavenly walk, but will daily call
 forth into use and exercise those graces, which
 will help thee forward, and especially

PATIENCE. Here is great need of patience
 --a continual war--and within thee--thine own
 bosom the seat of it--and thine own lusts carry-
 ing it on and maintaining it. The more spiri-
 tual thou art, the more wilt thou feel this in-
 ward conflict. The more thou growest into
 Christ, the more will thy corruptions stir and
 move--they will be thy continual plague, so that
 thou wilt not be able to draw any comfort from
 what thou art in thyself. Here is exercise for
 patience. Every where indwelling sin is present
 with thee: Upon every temptation ready with
 its flatteries to entice, and with its power to
 break out into act and deed. The opposing it,

is like cutting off a right hand, and plucking out a right eye—as contrary to nature, as painful. The hand and the eye cannot be destroyed twice, but inbred lusts evercome a thousand times are not in the least discouraged from warring against the soul. Like the troubled sea never at rest, they are always casting up some sinful mire and dirt. What canst thou do without faith in the Redeemer's blood, without patience to wait for the Redeemer's strength. Every moment there is need of faith and patience, and every moment if these graces be exercised they will be improved. The bearing of the cross continually, and fighting under it on the side of God will also be the means of teaching thee

THE TRUE SPIRITUAL MORTIFICATION, which does not consist in sin not being in thee, nor in its being put upon the cross daily, nor yet in its being kept upon it. There must be something more to establish perfect peace in thy conscience; and that is the testimony of God concerning the body of sin. He has provided for thy perfect deliverance from it in Christ. Every thing needful for this purpose was finished by him upon the cross. He was thy surety. He suffered for thee. Thy sins were crucified with him and nailed to his cross. They were put to death when he died: for he was thy covenant head, and thou as a member of his body wast legally represented by him, and art indeed dead to sin

by his dying to sin once. The law has now no more right to condemn thee, a believer, than it has to condemn him. Justice is bound to deal with thee, as it has with thy risen and ascended Saviour. If thou dost not thus see thy complete mortification in him, sin will reign in thee. No sin can be crucified either in heart or life, unless it be first pardoned in conscience: because there will be want of faith to receive the strength of Jesus, by whom alone it can be crucified. If it be not mortified in its guilt, it cannot be subdued in its power. If the believer does not see his perfect deadness to sin in Jesus, he will open a wide door to unbelief: and if he be not persuaded of his completeness in Christ, he gives room for the attacks of self-righteous and legal tempers. If Christ be not all in all: self must still be looked upon as something great, and there will be food left for the pride of self-importance and self-sufficiency. So that he cannot grow into the death of Christ in sensible experience, farther than he believes himself to be dead to sin in Christ. The more clearly and steadfastly he believes this, as the apostle did—

I AM CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST, in proportion will he cleave to Christ, and receive from him greater power to crucify sin. This believing view of his absolute mortification in Christ is the true gospel method of mortifying sin in our own persons.

Examine then, O my soul, the mistakes which thou hast made, and the temptations which thou art under, concerning this leading truth in thy walk. Pray to thy God for his wisdom to guide thee. Without it thou wilt be afraid, where no fear is. Thou wilt be inclined to think this doctrine rather encouraging to sin: because it seems to carnal reason to take off thy mind from watchfulness against it, and from praying for victory over it. But be assured this is a great error. If thou art not complete in Christ, thou never canst be complete. Seek for the death of sin where thou wilt, it is not to be found but in his death. Try to conquer it upon any other principle, than faith in his death, the very attempt is sinful, and proves thee to be under the law. Unless thou art one with him in his death, there can be no pardon of sin, and consequently no victory over it. O fear not then to lay the whole weight of thy salvation upon Jesus. Depend on him, as dying to sin for thee, and look at thyself dead to sin in him--as completely dead to it, as he is. Read the testimony of the holy Spirit. Study the infinite, the everlasting sufficiency of his death for thine absolute freedom from guilt and condemnation. Trust without wavering: be not afraid to view the everlasting perfection of thy deliverance in Jesus, and this will weaken the tyranny, and will crucify the power of sin. This will, and nothing else can. Read the sixth of the

the Romans, and pray for the Spirit of revelation to open it to thee. There thou wilt discover the true way to mortify sin. It is by believing, that thou art planted together with Christ in his death: from thence only thy pardon flows, from thence thy daily victory is received, and from thence thy eternal victory will be perfected. Fight on, soon thou shalt be, what Christ now is. The member shall be perfectly like the head. O glorious prospect! Thou shalt be with him and like him—spotless and fair, as Jesus, righteous and holy, happy in body and soul. Thou shalt see him as he is, and awaking after his likeness thou shalt be satisfied with it. Take up thy cross for the joy here set before thee. Bear it in faith. It will be light and easy to thy pardoned conscience: yea, the carrying of it in patience will bring forth many peaceable fruits of righteousness: Among the rest there is one, which in the sight of God is of great price, and which is daily improved by the inward cross, namely

HUMILITY, which consists in the right knowledge of ourselves, not only of what we have been, but also of what we now are. The best and holiest man upon earth has a corrupt fallen nature: he has flesh still which is always lusting against the spirit. While he is alive to God he feels it. He is sensible of the inward conflict. Dead men indeed feel nothing. A dead corpse has no sense of the worms which are eating it up.

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He that has these lusts in him and warring against his soul, and yet does not feel them, cannot be spiritually alive. A natural man has no sense of them, because they are in him, as worms in a dead body: just so it is with the perfectionist. But so soon, and so long, as he lives to God, he will perceive them. If he be in happy communion with God, indwelling sin is present to interrupt the enjoyment. If he exercise any grace, this besetting sin tries to weaken its actings. If he set about any duty, it will hinder him from doing it so perfectly, as God requires, and as he could wish. The abiding sense of these truths will keep down pride. The believer will see nothing of his own to trust in, no faith, or hope, or love, no faithfulness to grace, no holy obedience; all is stained and polluted. He is forced to cry out of his best duties--*unclean--unclean*. In this school the disciple learns to walk humbly with his God. The more he knows of himself, the more humble he becomes. And he grows in this heavenly grace, the more he is acquainted with the mercy of God in Jesus. This learnt by divine teaching keeps the believer meek and lowly in his own eyes. Nothing softens and melts the soul into holy tenderness like the sense of God's mercy. A man who feels the plague of his own heart is never truly humbled, until he be pardoned. But when he is justified from all things in Christ, in him a partaker of all spiritual

ritual blessings in earth and heaven, when he sees all his salvation of grace, of free sovereign grace, flowing from the absolute favor of electing love, and bestowed upon him, as unworthy an object, as ever did or can partake of it, then he becomes truly broken hearted. These truths taught of God bring every high thought into subjection to Christ Jesus. The soul bows before him; lies low at his feet; prostrates itself before the throne of his grace, and desires to be kept willing to take all its blessings out of his hands, and to use them to his glory. This is gospel humility, the true abasement of spirit, with which a man, sensible that he is saved by mere mercy, lothes himself. And while the experience of indwelling sin humbles him down to the dust, it produces through God's grace the happiest effects: for it keeps him in his strong tower and sanctuary, in which alone he is

SAFE. It is ever reminding him of his need of the blood of sprinkling--ever shewing him his want of a perfect righteousness--and ever preaching to him the necessity of his being kept by the power of God. And while he hearkens to these lessons, trusting to Jesus, he will stand fast and be established. The arm of the Lord God almighty will hold him up, and he shall be safe. While he lives thus out of himself, the sense of indwelling sin will lead him to his true

HAPPINESS,

HAPPINESS, which is all in the fulness of the God-man. He will enjoy the more of this, the less he finds in himself. When he cannot draw comfort from any thing of his own, he will seek it more in God. When all the streams are dried up, he will get nearer to the fountain head, and live more upon it. This is the portion of the Lord's people, and the inheritance of all his saints. And in this view indwelling sin is made the means of promoting their

HOLINESS. They see their continual need of Christ. They can do nothing without him; But believing their oneness with him, they desire to improve it in experience. Every thing they do keeps them sensible of their sins and wants, and shews them the necessity of living by the faith of the Son of God. This is true humility. The more they are humbled, the more they receive out of the fulness of Jesus: for he giveth more grace--more, to produce nearer fellowship with him in his death, whereby sin will be more dead, and in his resurrection, whereby the soul will be more alive to God. So that the humblest believer is the nearest to God, and is the safest, happiest, and holiest of all the men upon earth: Because he has most fellowship with God. He dwells in God, and God in him. Meditate, O my soul, upon this use of the cross. Is sin in thee? Dost thou feel it, and art thou fighting
against

against it? And does not this humble thee? Art thou freely forgiven all trespasses, and welling sin among the rest? Dost thou know that thou art a saved sinner—a brand plucked out of hell? And does not this humble thee? I see reason enough to be humbled, but I feel pride in me lusting against humility. O my precious Jesus, humble me under thy mighty hand. To thee I look for all my salvation. Lord, save me from pride. Thou hast made me willing to be taught of thee to be meek and lowly, and I come to thee praying, that the disciple may be as his master. O let me drink deep into thy Spirit. In every day's warfare against my corruptions, enable me to renounce myself, that I may find thou art carrying both me and my cross. Keep me humbled at thy feet, that thou mayest exalt me in due time. I pray to thee, my precious Saviour, for this grace, to mine eternal humbling, and to thine eternal exaltation. In life and death, and for evermore I hope to glory only in the Lord, and to triumph in the God of my salvation.

Thus the believer learns to walk humbly under the inward cross. He is brought to trust all in the Saviour's hand. Daily he discovers more of the ruins of the fall, which lead him to fresh discoveries of the perfect salvation in Jesus. If he attend to what is passing in his own breast, he finds his need of a Saviour every moment and for every

everything, by which means he grows in grace and in the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. He learns to put no confidence in the flesh, but to rejoice only in his completeness in Jesus, from whom all his comforts and victories are received. Thus while self is laid low, the Saviour is exalted, and his perfect work is more depended on. The believer by hope and love attains more delightful communion with his God. Indwelling sin is his cross, but he bears it, looking unto Jesus: from whom he receives strength to go on, yea to run the race set before him. By faith he sees in Jesus the corruption of his nature condemned and dead in law; he beholds himself freed from this, as well as from his other sins. Guilt is the most galling part of this cross; but when guilt is thus removed from the conscience, then the cross grows light. When taken up in faith and carried in love to the almighty Saviour, then it does not stop the believer in his fellowship with Jesus, or in his happy walk with him. Glory be to thee, my Lord, of this I have some experience. Yes, precious Jesus, I know the infinite value of that sacrifice, which put away sin. I bless thee for that offering, which perfects for ever. Interested in it, I would not distrust my completeness in thee. Through thy holy nature, I expect to be renewed after thy likeness. The fountain for cleansing from the filth of sin stands open: in it I daily wash

wash my spotted soul. In thy divine righteousness I see the law and justice of the Father infinitely honored by justifying me, and dealing with me, as perfectly righteous. Complete in thee I am. In thy work finished upon earth I am perfect, and am represented as such by thee in heaven. I believe thou appearest there as my divine intercessor, bearing my name upon thy shoulders and upon thy breast with a glory beyond all the precious stones in the world. O my blessed Jesus, increase this faith. Lead me from faith to faith; that while I am travelling heavenwards mine eye and my heart may be more simply fixed upon thee. Come thou glorifier of the Saviour, and discover to me more of the sinfulness of sin, and of my need of his salvation. Holy Spirit, teach me in the deepest sense of indwelling sin to trust wholly to the offering of the body of Jesus. O lead me to his cross, there to see all my sins nailed, crucified with him, dead in his death, buried in his grave: in this faith strengthen me mightily to resist and to conquer my corruptions. Enable me to experience the power of his cross, that I may feel sin weakened in the love and in the practice of it. Almighty Spirit, in my daily warfare I find no strength less than thine can make me conqueror: and therein thou hast caused me to put my trust. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the antient days in the generations of

of

of old: Art thou not it that cut the pride of nature to pieces, and wounded the old dragon? O my God, magnify thine arm in subduing every sin. Thou seest my naked heart, and its sighings are not hid from thee. My corruptions are indeed my cross: and they would have been a sore burden too heavy for me to bear, if the curse had not been taken out of them. But still pardoned as they are, yet in this tabernacle I do groan being burdened. I believe the day is coming when I shall have perfect and eternal freedom from sin and sorrow. The first fruits of this only make me long the more for the blessed harvest. But I desire to wait in hope, bearing my cross, till thy will be done. O Lord make me willing to resist, give me power to overcome indwelling sin, till the day of redemption, and mortality be swallowed up of life. Hear me, my good God, and answer me for thy name's sake, to the glory of Father, Son, and Spirit, the three in one Jehovah, to whom my heart now bows in worship, and my soul hopes soon to join the song of never ceasing praise. *Amen,* and *Amen.*

of
CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The believer fights the good fight of faith and goes forth conquering and to conquer.

WHEN the believer has been disciplined under the cross, and has learned to bear it with patience, the Captain of his salvation has other exercises for him. He has chosen him to be a soldier, and he intends to teach him to endure hardness. His life in Christ is one continued battle, not only against flesh and blood, but also against principalities and powers of earth and hell: He cannot discover their stratagems, nor overcome their assaults, but by being strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. His warfare is therefore to be carried on entirely by faith. The principles before laid down must be brought into use. What the spirit of God had discovered to him of his salvation in Jesus, is to be tried in every battle, and if it be maintained, it will be improved. If he hold fast the confidence of his faith, he will behave like a good soldier. If he always take up arms in absolute dependence on the divine General to give him courage, to order him how to attack his enemies, to bestow strength upon him daily to resist them, then victory will be certain: Yea he will be invincible while he stands

stands strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. He will meditate upon the principles, which he had been taught of God, and will find peace in his own conscience and joy in his heart by bringing them into daily experience. His believing views of the warfare to which he is called will be such as these——

I am through sovereign grace called to fight under the banner of Jesus—He has not left me to fight as uncertainly, but he has conquered all mine enemies for me, and he has undertaken to conquer them all in me. It is true, I am weak, but my Redeemer is strong, the Lord of hosts is his name. He has saved me from my sins, from the shame and pain of them, from the wicked one, and the wicked world, from the curse of the law, and from the wrath of God. He has given me a divine righteousness for my justification, and in it I am accepted before the throne: He has put it upon me for ornament and defence—it is a garment of salvation—which cannot be lost upon earth, and which will shine with never-fading beauty in heaven. The Father is perfectly reconciled, and loves me with a love that passes knowledge. I believe it. God is on my side: I need not fear what any enemy can do unto me. He has taken me into his protection. By his allwise counsel I am guided; by his almighty arm I am defended. My battles are the Lord's. Indeed mine enemies are many, and they

they are too cunning and too mighty for me. But why do they now fight against me? Is it not, because God is my friend? They hate me, because he loves me. While I lived in friendship with them, and was at war with God, they were always trying to make me happy. But ever since I fled to Jesus for refuge, and sought redemption in his blood, they have taken up arms against me: And they have raged more furiously since I was enabled to believe in him. But I have no reason to fear their opposition. With them is an arm of flesh, but with me is the Lord my God to help me, and to fight my battles. I may therefore go to my daily warfare in faith, regarding the commands, waiting for the fulfilling of the promises of my God, and relying upon the provision, which he has made for my present and for mine eternal victory.

Are thy meditations, O my soul, like these upon the Christian warfare? Examine thyself. If thou art at peace with God, thou must expect war. It is unavoidable. If it be in thy heart to please him who hath chosen thee to be a soldier, then all the powers of wickedness will be in arms. Night and day with never ceasing rage they will pursue thee. Deep laid plans will be formed, and fierce assaults will be made against thy true happiness. They will be attempting, so long as thou art in the world, by some cunning or force to draw thee from thy God.

Thy

Thy life from henceforth is to be one continued battle. Thy victory depends every moment upon holding fast thy confidence in God: And therefore thou must bring the principles of the doctrine of Christ into exercise. Thou hast seen how necessary they are for every step of thy walk, and thou wilt find them equally necessary for every part of thy warfare. This is a leading truth—Thine enemies are God's enemies. Once thou didst join with them, and wast on their side fighting against God, but he has saved thee from the guilt of thy rebellion. In free love he chose thee in his Son, and in sovereign mercy gave him for thee. The Son rejoiced to do his Father's will for thy salvation: He did it in his life: He suffered it in his death. The ever glorious work is finished. And it has been given thee on the behalf of Christ to believe. The Lord the Spirit has satisfied thy conscience, and has comforted thy heart with the knowledge of this perfect salvation. The Father is thy Father in Jesus—thine by his own free gift—thine by his own unchangeable purpose—and now thine by thy free choice. He has made thee willing in the day of his power to take him for thy God. He is perfectly reconciled unto thee in his Son: And should not this perfectly reconcile thee to him? His love to thee is wonderful in all its properties, in its rise and origin, and in its free and full communication of every covenant blessing:

sing: And does not the belief of this engage thy heart in love to God? Dost thou not love him for his love to thee, and is it not thy daily prayer, that thy love may abound yet more and more? Has not the sense of this peace and love been improved in thy daily walk with him? Hast thou not found the truth, and enjoyed the comfort of these graces in thine experience? O fear not then, since God is on thy side—fear not, O my soul, to go to war with any enemy, who would rob thee of the peace of God in thy conscience, or of the love of God in thy heart. This is the design of all those who fight against thee. They want to shake thy confidence in God, and so to draw thee from him. They know, they cannot succeed, while thou standest strong in the Lord, trusting to his being thy reconciled God, and loving Father. O keep this trust in him, as the apple of thine eye—bind it continually to thy heart in love—and fight for it as for thy precious life. Be assured, no enemies can prevail against thee, until they have first overcome thy faith: because while thou makest God thy refuge and strength, his almighty arm will be thy defence. Be not afraid, says he, I am with thee, and I will keep thee by my power through faith unto salvation.

In this warfare it is the chief business of the believer to have respect to the orders given him. He is entirely to depend on the Captain of his

salvation. What has he said, O my soul, to encourage thee to go to battle without fear? Mind his description—it is THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH, in which thou art engaged. By faith thou art to attack thy foes: by faith alone thou canst conquer them: and faith must have his

COMMANDS, or else it can have no lawful warrant to fight, and no just ground to expect victory. Indeed if he had spoken nothing, there could have been no faith: for his word comes first—it is spoken—it is heard—and then faith comes by hearing. Look well then to his word. Study it carefully. If thou obey it aright, thou art absolutely safe in the hottest battle, and thy victory is as certain, as if the crown was already upon thy head. These are
 “ his standing orders—Fear thou not, for I am
 “ with thee: be not afraid, for I am thy God, I
 “ will strengthen thee, yea I will help thee, yea I
 “ will uphold thee with the right hand of my
 “ righteousness. Behold all they that were in-
 “ censed against thee shall be ashamed and con-
 “ founded: they shall be as nothing, and they
 “ that strive with thee shall perish. Thou shalt
 “ seek them, and shalt not find them, even them
 “ that contended with thee: they that war
 “ against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing
 “ of nought: for the Lord thy God will hold
 “ thy right hand, saying unto thee—fear not, I
 “ will help thee. Fear not thou worm Jacob,
 “ and

"and ye men of Israel: I will help thee, saith
 "the Lord, and thy Redeemer the holy One of
 "Israel." Are these indeed the words of God?
 Does he command poor worms, weak and de-
 fenceless, to go to war without fear? Does he
 encourage them to look up to his arm, promising
 to be on their side? Yes, the Lord of hosts
 fights for them. All their enemies are his, and
 therefore they may safely trust, and not be afraid.
 O my soul, read carefully, read again and again,
 mark and inwardly digest every word of this di-
 vine command; and in obedience to it expect
 his help. Face thine enemies, whoever they
 be, with holy boldness: For God is with thee.
 He has undertaken to fight thy battles. Look at
 this scripture. Canst thou meditate on it, and
 yet be afraid? Of whom, or of what? O vile
 unbelieving fear! Beg of God to save thee from
 it. Honor the Captain of thy salvation. Trust
 him. Doubt not but thou art as safe, obeying
 his orders, and expecting his help, as almighty
 power can make thee. Observe the courage of
 one of thy fellow soldiers. Observe his victory
 ---"When I cry unto thee, then shall mine ene-
 "mies be turned back: this I know, for God is
 "on my side. In God will I praise his word;
 "in the Lord will I praise his word: in God
 "have I put my trust, I will not be afraid what
 "man can do unto me." The enemies of Da-
 vid came to swallow him up, but he encouraged

himself in the Lord his God. He attended to his orders. He considered the word which was spoken to him. He depended upon it, and had reason to praise God for his faithfulness: for God fulfilled it unto him. There was in it a

PROMISE, as well as a command--do this--and I will be with thee. The promise is always made good to them who keep the command in faith. The one is our divine warrant to fight, the other is our encouragement to fight in certain hopes of victory. Attend, O my soul, to the promise, and fear not the accomplishment of it--" In righteousness shalt thou be established ;
 " thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou
 " shalt not fear, and from terror, for it shall not
 " come near thee. Behold, they shall surely
 " gather together, but not by me: whosoever
 " shall gather together against thee, shall fall
 " for thy sake. Behold, I have created the
 " smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and
 " that bringeth forth an instrument for his work,
 " and I have created the waster to destroy. No
 " weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper,
 " and every tongue that shall rise in judgment
 " against thee, thou shalt condemn. This is the
 " heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their
 " righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Thou art here forewarned of thine enemies: they *shall* gather against thee. But the Lord is not with them. He is thy defender and mighty deliverer,

and he will bring all opposition to nought for thy sake. However numerous their hosts may be, yet they shall fall. Whatever weapons of war they may form, yet none of them shall prosper. This is the certain heritage of all believers. Their righteousness and their strength is of me, saith the Lord—I will fight their battles, and I will never leave them nor forsake them: I will make them daily conquerors, and behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised them, I will make them more than conquerors.

Is this, O my soul, the infallible word of promise? Has the Lord of hosts undertaken to stand by his people? Has he engaged to lead them out to war by his wisdom, to defend them in battle by his power, and to give them eternal victory to the praise of his own grace? O what motives are these to strengthen thy heart and thy hands. What hast thou reason to fear, since the almighty is on thy side? The battle is his. If hosts of enemies oppose, yet following his orders, and trusting to his strength, thy victory is infallibly sure: For then thou wilt fight against them strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and thou wilt be invincible.

IN THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD. This armor is the provision, which God has made for the safety of his soldiers. He puts it on them, and he keeps it on them. It is a whole armor,
a complete

a complete defence from head to foot. In great mercy their God, who provided it, has revealed to them the use of every part. In the sixth of the Ephesians the apostle has described it at large. He supposes them to be acquainted with the christian doctrines, and to have walked in the comfort of them, and he calls upon them to bring them into practice in their daily warfare. "It only remains my brethren, says he, that ye be "strong in the Lord," for no strength less than his can keep you, "and in the might of what "he is able to do"—by faith relying upon his promise, and trusting to his power, "putting "on the whole armor of God," that being strengthened mightily by the Spirit in the inner man, ye may be preserved dependent upon the Lord, and enabled to engage in his strength, and to conquer to his glory. Unless you thus rely upon his word and arm, you will not be able to stand against the wiles of the devil: for we wrestle not only against flesh and blood, but also against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world; against spiritual wickedness in high places: therefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be enabled to withstand in the evil day against the combined legions of earth and hell, and after ye have done all to stand conquerors in the field of battle, when your enemies are driven out of it. Stand therefore having your
loins

loins girt about with truth--this is the first grace in use--

SAVING KNOWLEDGE ; which the holy Spirit teaches. He guides believers into all truth necessary for their salvation. As the military girdle went round the loins, and bound all the armor together, so the knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jesus, binds together all the graces. It is of the essence of every one of them--it is light in the understanding to discover what they are, that they may be received into the heart in love, and that in obeying the truth their influence may operate upon the life and conversation. When a man is thus taught of God, then he sees his need of the breast-plate of righteousness, and he puts it on, namely the

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS of the God-man. The breast-plate was armor for the vital parts--so is the righteousness of Christ--it is a perfect protection from every stroke of every enemy. He that wears it upon his heart, believing in the life and death of Immanuel, has armor proof against all weapons. If the strength of his adversaries could be collected into one arm, which was to strike one mighty blow, his breast-plate would ward it off. The armor of God could not be hurt. The soldier with it on cannot perish, but shall have everlasting life. Therefore covered with this invincible breast-plate he may face the stoutest foes, and attack them without fear. He
may

may march on undaunted, "having his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace."

PEACE WITH GOD through Jesus Christ is another grace of the Spirit, which mightily strengthens the inner man. Whoever sees the truth of the gospel, and believes it, will discover God to be at peace with him, perfectly reconciled to him in Jesus, and who out of his fatherly love will over-rule all things for his good. In the sense of this he may go on with holy boldness, as the soldier did with his greaves on. When his feet and legs were armed with them he was not afraid of thorns or briars, of rough roads or sharp spikes. In like manner the peace, which the gospel brings, carries the Christian soldier fearless through difficulties. He will march on conquering, if he keep on his greaves. If he maintain peace with God through Jesus Christ, he will not be stopt by war, or trouble, or temptation. But he must remember, that to every piece of armor faith is essentially necessary—the girdle is good for nothing without the belief of the truth—the breast-plate is no defence without faith in the righteousness of God our Saviour—the greaves are no more than if the feet were covered with a bit of thin gauze, unless faith be mixed with the gospel: "Therefore TO ALL, THESE take the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the

" the

* the wicked one." What excellent things are here spoken of

FAITH, as a grace of the holy Spirit! When they used to fight with bows and arrows, the soldier could hold up his shield and keep himself safe: so the Christian soldier, if the fiery darts of satan fly thick about him, by faith will quench them all. He has much combustible within him, and one spark would set him in a flame, if he had not his shield: but armed with it and opposing it to the arrows of the wicked one, he may lift up his head with joy: "For he has the "helmet of salvation" upon it. The grace here meant is

HOPE, and it is fitly compared to an helmet, which was armor for the head, and a defence for all the senses which are seated in the head. It is called the helmet of SALVATION, because it ALWAYS SAVES. It never can be destroyed. None of the senses of the spiritual man can perish in this warfare: and therefore it is a hope that maketh not ashamed. Hope with its helmet on fears no blows. It can truly say, I am commanded to be strong and of good courage, not to be afraid or dismayed: for the Lord my God is with me, whithersoever I go. Trusting to this command, hope is in wars and fightings full of glory and immortality. The Lord's orders to march forward are the ground of hope: and this supplies him with a weapon, which none of his enemies

enemies can withstand, even the sword of the Spirit, "which is the *Word of God*." The scripture is called a sword—(an offensive weapon—and it is the only one, which the christian soldier has—all the rest being for his defence) because it is mighty through the Spirit, working by it to cut off all opposers. Our Lord in combat with the old serpent defeated him with this sword. And the noble army of his followers, now crowned in glory, overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and *by the word of their testimony*—they held fast their confidence in the word, and with it, as with a two edged sword they slew the old dragon, and gained eternal victory over him. Fight against him, O my soul, with the same weapon. Keep the sword in thy hand. Thou wilt stand in need of it every moment against that subtle foe. The word is the means of overcoming the devil, and it is mighty through God, when heard and read in faith, and inwardly digested by prayer. The best soldier in the Lord's army is best acquainted with the necessity of prayer: he not only believes what God says of his armor, but he also depends upon him for the daily experience of it: and therefore when he has put his armor on, in the

PRAYER OF FAITH he calls upon the Captain of his salvation for orders, courage, strength, victory, and every thing needful—"Praying always" ways

“ways with all prayer and supplication in the
“Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perfe-
“verance.” O my God, teach me thus to pray.
I would depend on thee, and express my depen-
dence without ceasing: for I am sensible that
without thee I can do nothing. Although thou
hast chosen me to be a soldier, yet I have neither
counsel nor strength for war. My foolish heart
loves ease: it would have the crown, but it
would be excused striving lawfully for it. I find
nothing in myself that disposes me to endure the
hardship of the christian warfare. My whole
trust therefore is in thee Jesus, my Lord, and my
God. Thou hast called me to the battle: thou
must fit me for it, keep me in it, and make me
conqueror. All is of thee. The whole armor of
God, which I have received, the saving know-
ledge, the righteousness and the peace, that
precious faith and glorious hope, that sure
word, wherein thou hast caused me to put my
trust—these are the gifts of thy grace: and on
thee, my Jesus, I entirely depend for the right
use of them. Thou must still cover my head in
the day of battle. Mine eyes are lifted up to
thee, my hopes centre in thee, from whom alone
cometh all my salvation. O Lord of hosts, keep
me in this simple dependence upon thy word and
arm, that I may exercise thy graces in fighting
thy battles: and if thou art pleased to give me
daily victory, I may be willing to return thee all
glory. O faithful promise-keeping God, stand
by

by me, and enable me to hold out, till I finish my course with joy, and my warfare being ended, I may bless thee for evermore for that peace, which passeth all understanding. O grant me this for thy mercies sake. *Amen.*

If this be thy dependence, if thou art standing in the Lord's strength, and trusting entirely to his armor, then consider, O my soul, thy safety in every battle. If thou go to war, calling upon thy God to be with thee, and to give thee victory, then victory is certain. Thou canst not be conquered, if thou fight in faith, relying upon the orders of thy General, expecting his promised help, and waiting for it in prayer, trusting to the armor, which he has put upon thee. Is this then thy defence? Dost thou *pray always*—begin the good fight—carry it on—and end it, with the prayer of faith? Blessed be his holy name, since this is in some measure thy case: go on in his strength, and fear not to fight his battles, who hath chosen thee to be a soldier. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart. The more bold thou art in thy faith, the stronger shalt thou be in thy warfare: for whatever thou hast courage to do at his command, thou shalt perform in his strength. And why should a doubt arise? Hast thou forgotten, that the great decisive battle has been fought and won. Immanuel stood up, the great champion for his people. The almighty warrior entered the lists with their enemies, and

he

he conquered all their hosts. He triumphed over satan and the world, over sin and death; and he led captivity captive. Remember, he calls upon thee to share in his victory, by faith to partake with him of the spoils, and to keep the vanquished enemies daily under thy feet. He has made them his footstool, and he will make them thine. This is thy warfare. And what hast thou to fear in it? What hurt can a dead man do thee? If he has a gun charged in his hand he cannot fire it. He is not able to stir a finger. No more able is any adversary to destroy thee. Whilst thou art trusting to the complete victory of Jesus, thou wilt daily share with him in it. And the more simple thy trust is in him, the greater conquest will he give thee, because he will then receive from thee greater glory. How should this consideration inspire thee with courage—it is for his glory that thou shouldst conquer. Thy God commands thee to fight on his side, promises to assist thee, has provided invincible armor, and has in his own person engaged and defeated every enemy, against whom thou art to fight; and therefore he requires thee in obedience to his orders, depending on his promises and armor, to bring him glory by conquering in his strength. O my soul, hast thou not a zeal to promote the honor of thy Saviour? Is not his fame and renown very near thy heart? Dost thou not think it a privilege to be any ways instrumental in exalting his great name? Yes, Lord,

Lord, thou hast made me willing to glorify thee. Thou art my lawful king, and I desire to honor thee by following thine orders, fighting thy battles, and relying entirely upon thy promises. I would not question thy faithfulness to them, nor fear any enemy against whom thou hast commanded me to fight. I would not doubt of thy strength to carry me through the battle, or to give me the promised victory. In this faith I conduct my warfare, and I would have all my success to bring fresh glory to thee. I know that the courage, which I have in the field of battle, is not from nature, but from grace. It arises from the belief that I am armed with the whole armor of God, and that the enemies against whom I fight are his as well as mine—his—whom he conquered for me—and is now conquering in me—and all to his own praise. From hence, Lord, arises my sure and certain hope of victory. I ground it on thy word. I fight in faith. I trust to thy complete victory, and now I am sharing in it. My daily victories are only the fruit and effect of thine. O my almighty Jesus, give me grace to ascribe all the glory to thee. It is thy due. Make me willing to give it thee for the victories obtained for me, and in me. O keep me by thine almighty power through faith, till I have fought the good fight and won the prize. Grant me this, blessed king of saints, to thine eternal honor and glory. *Amen.*

CHAP. XII.

The believer marches on fighting the good fight of faith, and daily gains victory over the world.

THE world signifies the visible frame of nature; not the earth only, but also the present constitution of the universe of animate and inanimate beings: All which were created good at first, but through the sin of man, and the just sentence of God, are now subject to vanity.

The world is become a great enemy to fallen man: Because it is always presenting something to his senses, which is a temptation to sin. It keeps him from God by its flatteries, promising to make him happy in its enjoyments. It sets them before him. He looks, and loves. He gives his heart a willing sacrifice to the world, and suffers himself to be entirely influenced by its hopes and fears.

While man was innocent, every object raised in him some spiritual idea, and thereby led him to contemplate and adore the great Creator in his works: But upon the fall he lost this use of natural objects: They did not as they struck upon the senses, excite correspondent ideas in the mind:

Because

Because the man was alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in him. His understanding was in darkness: He could not see the things of the spirit of God; neither indeed could he know them for want of spiritual discernment. Being thus deprived of the image and likeness of God in knowledge, having no will but the will of the flesh, and his heart being at enmity with God, he sinks into communion with the creature. His very mind is carnal. His affections are earthly. His pursuits are after temporal things. His enjoyments are in the delights of sense. In this state he lives a mere animal life without God in the world.

Indeed he has within him an immortal soul; but it is apostate. It is fallen from God, and has no more communion with him by nature, than the devil has. The law has condemned it to death—The soul that sinneth it shall die—and it is already spiritually dead to God, being as incapable of quickening itself as a dead corpse is. Therefore it cannot attain of itself any true knowledge of God, or have any real fellowship with the things of God. While fallen man is in this state, his earthly and sensual appetites take the lead; and all the light in his mind, and the desires of his heart only dispose him to seek for their present gratification. Outward objects offer themselves to him; they make an impression upon his senses, and sometimes act upon them

them very forcibly, soliciting and enticing to the enjoyment of some fancied good, and so long as he continues an unregenerate man, these temptations prevail, and keep him from God. He does not see God in outward objects. He does not love God for them. He does not enjoy them to the glory of God. God is not in all his thoughts.

Man has been called a microcosm. He is so wonderfully made, that the whole creation comes under the observation of some of his senses. His eye, by means of light, can discover the form and surface of all objects. The ear takes in all sounds. The nose perceives all vapours and smells. The palate tastes all sorts of fluids. All sorts of solids come under the sense of feeling, which is in every part of the body, for the benefit and preservation of the whole. Thus every object in the universe is fitted to act upon some of the senses, and was intended by the Creator, to excite some spiritual idea. But this use was lost by the fall. The impression made by outward objects does not raise up the mind to God, and excite adoration and praise, but keeps the heart from him, and affords a continual temptation to live to the world, and to the things of it. Whatever is presented to the eye, to the ear, &c. can stir up and bring forth evil. And actually does, according to the scripture: For the whole world (as fallen from God) lieth in
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"wickedness," and is at enmity with him; and therefore believers are commanded—"Love ye not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him: For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." Mind, ALL that is in the world is the means of feeding some lust: For which reason the apostle calls it—"this present evil world"—evil, because of sin, and because of its temptations to keep the heart in love with it, and to shut out the love of the Father.

How awfully solemn are these scriptures! What strict examination, O my soul, should they put thee upon! Search, and try thyself by them; and see whether thou art saved from the love of the world. It is a blessed part of redemption, and it is one of the brightest jewels in the Redeemer's crown. How infinitely glorious is this character—"Jesus Christ gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world." This deliverance is worthy of God. We had sinned by loving this present evil world, and he came to save us from our sins: It ruled over our hearts and lives, and kept us under its tyranny, and he came to deliver us from the love and from the power of it. Thrice happy are they, for whom he thus gave himself.

himself. O my soul, read and study the everlasting honors of this great victory, and see, whether thou art indeed a partaker of them. Jehovah was made flesh for his people, and as their divine surety came to conquer their enemies, the world among the rest. He was in their nature to enter into open war with it, and to overcome every temptation, by which it had drawn Adam or any of his descendents from God. Thus he was to conquer the world *for* them; and then by his Spirit he was to conquer it *in* them. He begun the battle with his first breath, and every moment of his life he was victorious. The world has its snares for every age and state, but he fell into none of them. His hands were clean, His heart was pure. He never lift up his soul to vanity. He was in his infancy *the holy child* Jesus: And he grew in wisdom and stature. When he was twelve years old he was wiser than his teachers; For he sat in the midst of the doctors both hearing them, and asking them questions: And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. His delight was in the law of the Lord, and in his law did he meditate day and night--He saw things as they are there described in their true nature. The world could not impose upon him. He lived above its offers of good. And he feared not the worst of its threatened evils. When he begun his ministry he

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fought a pitched battle; and became an eternal conqueror: The prince of this world was permitted to try every object by which the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life, had seduced mankind. They were presented to Christ in their richest dress. The beauty, the pleasure, the honor, and riches of the world were set before him in all their glory. But they made no impression. They did not darken his understanding, nor influence his heart, nor provoke any sensual appetite. He rejected every pleasing offer: He withstood every flattering allurements. Thus he conquered the world; but not for himself. His victory over all its temptations was for his people. He accounted their enemies his. He fought their battles. He conquered, as a king for his subjects. And he gives them to share with him in his triumph, when they believe in him: for thus he encourages them—"These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace, in the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good courage, I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD." The world is your enemy. It had you in bondage, and you could not free yourselves: therefore I came in your nature, God manifest in the flesh, to conquer it for you, and I have obtained a perfect conquest. When I have proclaimed it to your consciences, and pardoned your idolatrous attachment to the world, when is me ye have found peace, yet still the world will

will be your enemy. Because I have chosen you out of it, therefore it will hate you. My peace will occasion and increase your tribulation in it. But fear not. Remember it is a vanquished foe. Attack it in my strength, as partakers of my victory. Fight against it, and treat it, as under my feet and made my footstool. Whenever it tempts you, depend absolutely upon my conquest, and you will find my grace almighty to crucify the world to you, and you to it.

How animating are these words! with what courage should they inspire the Christian soldier! although the world be his enemy, yet it cannot conquer him, and rob him of his crown. The main battle has been fought, the victory is gained, and the conqueror is already crowned in the name and person of all the redeemed. By faith he gives them their share in his victory, as it is written: "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Every person who is born again by the Spirit has a new nature spiritual and heavenly, and has new senses to exercise about spiritual things. His renewed faculties are formed for heavenly things, as his bodily senses are for material. By faith he sees a better world than this, and surveys its beauties and glories. He has ears to hear the joyful sound of gospel grace, and to receive it. When that name, which is dear and precious above every
name,

name, is preached, it is to him as ointment poured forth : the sweet smelling favor refreshes his heart and exhilarates his spirits. Then he tastes that the Lord is gracious—foretastes his heavenly love, and as truly lays hold of and enjoys its spiritual blessings, as he ever did of any thing material. He is created anew in Christ Jesus, not only that he may know these things, but may also partake of them—as truly now by faith, as he ever will by sense : And the more he knows and the more he partakes of them, the more will he be delivered from this present evil world : “ For this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” By faith we see the victory of Christ, and rest upon it, and the more safely we put our trust and confidence in it, the more fellowship we shall have with him in its fruits—more wisdom to see the vanity of the world, as he saw it—more grace to deliver us from the love of it—and more strength to subdue its temptations. These are some of the happy effects of his conquests, which he left us to enjoy here, as pledges of our being one day what he now is. He is more than conqueror, so shall we be through him that loveth us. As our faith increases we shall share more with him, and triumph more over the smiles and the frowns of the world.

Since this is the only way to conquer the world, art thou, O my soul, conquering it in
this

this way, and hast thou faith in the victory of Jesus? Dost thou depend on him for the pardon of thy former love of the world, and for the crucifying the love of it in thy heart? Art thou relying upon his victorious grace to make thee a daily conqueror over all its temptations? Examine thy warfare, and see whether it be carried on according to the scripture rule, and with the promised success. Look at some of the Lord's champions. Survey the triumphs of Moses, and remember the Lord's hand is not shortened—"BY FAITH Moses when he was
" come to years refused to be called the son of
" Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer
" affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming
" the reproach of Christ greater riches than the
" treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto
" the recompence of the reward." How great was this faith! how glorious its victories! It was a divine grace, and exercised by a divine operation—mighty through God. By it Moses saw the reality of heavenly things: by it he tasted their sweetness, enjoyed their blessedness, and had a hope full of glory and immortality. The world made him its highest offers, but he rejected them. His eye was kept single, his heart chaste towards his God. The honor of Pharaoh's alliance he despised. He preferred affliction with the people of God to the pleasures of sin. He embraced
3 reproach,

reproach, when it came on him for following Christ, and he esteemed it beyond all the treasures of Egypt. He saw the vanity and emptiness of earthly enjoyments, and he trampled upon them, having respect to the recompence of reward. Thus he was crucified to the world. What an exalted character! There is no such hero in the records of prophane history, but thank God there are great numbers in sacred, who followed the steps of his faith. Every soldier of Christ Jesus is called to war against the world, and every good soldier is a daily conqueror. The world is always present, and has its temptations ready to stop him, but he meets them strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, trusting to the whole armor of God. Then victory is certain. And in order that the Lord may have all the glory, he will keep him fighting and praying in this manner--

This world is not my portion. My happiness does not consist in loving and enjoying the things of it. It is an evil world--it lieth in wickedness--Satan has his seat and throne in it--and it is condemned to fire. Thank God, mine eyes are open to see a better world than this, and I am travelling to it. I believe it was the purpose and will of the eternal Three to choose me to be an heir of the world to come. Glory be to the Father for his free choice, and for all the blessings of his love. Glory be to the co-equal Son,
for

for his complete and everlastingly perfect salvation. Glory be to the eternal Spirit, to whom I am indebted, for what I believe of the Son's salvation, and for what I have experienced of the Father's love. On thee, O God the Holy Ghost, I place my dependence for carrying on the work which thou hast begun. I would be guided by thy counsel every step of my walk, and strengthened by thee for every part of my warfare. Keep me in the right way, and make me conqueror over all the enemies who would stop me in it, or turn me out of it; especially deliver me from this present evil world. While I am going through it to a better, preserve my heart from the love of it. O my God, give me a stranger's temper, and a pilgrim's frame. Let me live as a sojourner here below, that the good things I meet with on my journey may not tempt me to make this my rest, and the evil things I meet with may not lead me to fret and murmur, as if God was not my Father, and his heaven my home. O thou divine teacher, shew me daily the glory of my Saviour's victory over the world, that I may share with him in it; and enable me to go forth conquering and to conquer in his strength, and to his praise. Help me to look upon the world, and to treat it, as he did, that feeling the emptiness of its offered happiness, I may with a single heart cleave to my Father in Jesus, and may be saved from the spirit of

of

of the world. Keep me waiting for my appointed time, sitting quite loose and free to the things about me.—And let heavenly and eternal things be always present to my faith, in their reality and blessedness, that I may grow more alive to them, and more dead to every thing else. Preserve my heart, O my gracious God, that it may be simple with thee, when I am in my worldly business. Enable me to cast all my cares and burdens on thee, believing thou carest for me. O daily crucify the world to me, and me to it, that when its offers stand in competition with thy love, I may have grace to reject them. In this holy war carry me on glorifying him who hath called me to be a soldier. Grant me this for Jesus sake, *Amen*, and *Amen*.

CHAP. XIII.

The believer marches on resisting and overcoming the wiles and the assaults of the tempter.

SATAN is a continual adversary. He rebelled against the sovereign will of the most high in heaven, and was cast out. As soon as man was formed, he began to tempt him to rebel against God, and he succeeded. Ever since the revelation was made of the divine purpose to redeem sinners, he has set himself up against it, and with impotent rage opposed it. He is always trying to hinder sinners from coming to the Saviour, and when they are come to him, to hinder them from living by faith upon his fulness. On the side of Satan are principalities and powers, combined armies and united legions of apostate spirits—formidable to man for their number—more so for their subtlety and cunning—they have stratagems and wiles, depths of skill to deceive—in which they are so successful that they have deceived the whole world. Their courage is desperate. They fear nothing: for they were mad enough to take up arms against the Almighty. No wonder then that they should be unwearied in their attacks against man. They are

are always upon the watch—ready as one temptation fails to present another. Their strength is very great—they are called principalities and powers—rulers and princes—yea the god of this world: because they work, as they please, in the children of disobedience; whom they keep so fast bound in the chains of sin, that no human arm can break them asunder. And it is the only joy they know—the joy of hell—to rivet the chains of sin upon those poor captives, till they bind them in everlasting chains of darkness.

These, O my soul, are thine enemies. They had drawn thee into their rebellion, and they are still trying to draw thee into their torments. They have free access to thy fallen nature. They know how to make use of the objects in the world to work upon thy senses, and to stir up evil thoughts. They have fiery darts always at hand to throw at thy faith, and rest not night and day in attacking thy peace and happiness in Jesus.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name for undertaking to save thee from those enemies. The love of the Father gave his Son to be the woman's seed—Jehovah incarnate—for his people. In their nature he was to bruise the head of the serpent: his cunning, his poison, and all his power to hurt, lie in his head: when this is bruised, he is defeated. The battle to be fought was foretold,
and

and the victory to be won was promised to Adam; and by faith in it, he and all the redeemed in the Old Testament conquered satan. In the fulness of time God was manifest in the flesh: he came to destroy the works of the devil. Sin is his great work; by it he drew man from God, and by it he keeps man from God. Immanuel began the destruction of the works of the devil by taking human nature. His manhood was perfectly holy—it had not, it could not have, any sin: because God was in Christ.

There was every thing in his holy life, which the law could require. He obeyed all its precepts with uninterrupted conformity, and being co-equal and co-eternal with the Father his obedience was therefore divine, absolutely complete, and infinitely sufficient to justify for ever. He was tempted indeed, but he overcame every temptation. He defeated satan in all his attempts, inasmuch that when he was entering upon the last scene of his life, he could declare—"The prince of this world cometh, AND HATH NOTHING IN ME." He did come, and the great pitched battle was fought which was to decide for ever, Whether the seed of the woman, or the serpent should be crowned conqueror. The battle began in the garden of Gethsemane, and was finished upon mount Calvary. Every stratagem of infernal policy was then

then tried: every assault of devilish malice was exerted against the Captain of our salvation: but he conquered them all, as it was foretold--"Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under thy feet." He trod upon the serpent's head, and crushed it, but at the same time the serpent bit his heel. The heel is his lowest part, his body--this fell in the conflict, but he completed his victory by the loss of his life. The apostle speaks of the cross, upon which he bled and died, as the great scene of this engagement, and on which he vanquished and triumphed for ever over the powers of hell--having spoiled principalities and powers, and taken away all their armor wherein they trusted, he made a shew of them openly triumphing over them upon the cross, leading them as you would captives in chains; rebels still, but unable to rob the Lord Christ of the glory of any part of his conquest: Thus through death he conquered death, and him that had the power of death, that is the devil. O blessed and almighty Jesus, eternal thanks are due to thee for this most glorious victory. Satan is now a vanquished foe. He is under thy feet, thou high exalted head of the redeemed. Thou hast for them, and in their stead overcome all his wiles and assaults. He may tempt, but he cannot conquer them. He has

has no right to accuse them—thou hast made an end of sin. He has no power to torment them—thou hast brought in everlasting righteousness. He cannot pluck them out of thy hands—they are dear to thee, and kept as the apple of thine eye. Glory be to thee, thou wilt soon bring them out of the reach of his temptations, and thou wilt be to them an eternal and infinitely perfect Saviour.

In this faith, O my soul, thou art called upon to take up arms against the old serpent. Thou art to fight against him under the banner of JESUS—a name terrible to the devil and his angels. Trusting to the victory of Jesus for thee, and to the strength of Jesus working in thee, thou art daily to bring him honor and renown. How safe, how blessed is such a warfare! Thou hast the wisdom of thy God and Saviour to discover to thee the wiles of Satan. Trust to it, O my soul. Leave thyself simply to his direction; and although Satan be subtle and cunning—although he has depths of policy, and plans out of number, yet thou shalt not be ignorant of his devices. Thy all-knowing Saviour will detect his plots, and turn the counsel of that Ahitophiel into folly. And if he attack thee as a roaring lion, yet fear him not. Thy Redeemer is strong. He has bruised the serpent's head; resist him in faith, and thou shalt bruise it also. Lean on the arm of thy Jesus: Depend on his promised strength:

Follow

Follow his orders, and thou shalt tread Satan under thy feet daily.

But above all remember, that thou canst only conquer him by faith,—by faith in the victory of Jesus, built upon thy faith in the word of Jesus: For thus the scripture testifies of the conquerors now round the throne, “that they overcame the devil “by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word “of their testimony”—they overcame him by depending upon the atoning blood, and by trusting to what the word says of its all-sufficiency to save; and they found by experience the promised victory. To the same effect the apostle Peter stirs up believers to a sobriety in the use of all creature comforts, and to a continual watchfulness against their enemies, in order that they might daily conquer.—“Be sober, be vigilant, “because your adversary the devil, as a roaring “lion, walketh about, seeking who he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith.” This brings victory. The believer resists the devil, and stands against him stedfastly in the power of Christ. This power is almighty, and therefore faith relying upon it infallibly secures victory. The devil may throw his fiery darts thick and fast, but the shield of faith is proof against them. It is able through God to quench them; so that the fire of temptation shall not inflame the soul. How precious are these scriptures! How encouraging to the Christian soldier!

Follow they

they promise him every thing needful for the battle, and for victory. Why then shouldst thou doubt, O my soul, of the promised blessings? Take courage. Fight under the banner of Jesus. — Keep close to his colours. Follow strictly his orders: And he will keep Satan under thy feet to day, and thou shalt be more than conqueror over him for ever.

Considering thy war with Satan in this light, what is there in it, O my soul, to stop thee in thy way to heaven? Thou art called upon to fight against him, but then it is in the Lord's strength, and as a partaker of his conquest. He made all thine enemies his. He fought thy battles. His triumph is thine. Thou mayest therefore sing of victory before every battle. Thou dost not fight to gain the pardon of thy sins, or to make thyself righteous; but to oppose thine adversary, who would draw thee into sin, and if he could, would rob thee of thy righteousness. He hates thee, because Christ loves thee. But his hatred is in vain. Thy Saviour has conquered him for thee, and by faith will conquer him in thee: For thou art kept by his almighty power. Trusting to this, go forth strong in the Lord. While thou art living in communion with him, thy warfare will be successful. If thou attend to his word, and follow his orders, he will encourage thy heart, and strengthen thy hands with such promises as these—

I have chosen thee to be a soldier, and I send thee out to fight against all the enemies of thy peace. But thou dost not go to this warfare at thine own charges, nor carry it on doubtful of victory. I have provided every thing needful for maintaining the battle, and for bringing thee off conqueror. Thou shalt find much profit in this holy war. It will be the means of keeping up constant fellowship with me. Thou shalt see thy need of coming to me for courage, for orders, for strength; and by faith thou wilt receive sensible experience of my being present with thee, and on thy side. Only trust me, and thou shalt find me faithful to my promise of help and victory. Go forth then to thy daily warfare, and boldly face Satan. Fear him not in the least: for that would betray a doubt of my having him under my feet, or of my putting him under thine. Give not place to him; no, not for a moment: but resist him, and continue to resist him, steadfast in faith and prayer--trusting to my promise and depending on mine arm. Be sober, be vigilant. Thus oppose the devil, and thou wilt certainly conquer him. And having conquered, fight on. In the fight look to me for victory, having obtained it, expect a fresh battle, and look still to me for victory: And thus go on conquering and to conquer. Thy crown is in my keeping. As sure as I have it on my head, it shall be on thine. Thou shalt soon sit down
with

with me on my throne a crowned conqueror for evermore.

Glory be to thee, my precious Jesus, for these faithful promises, in which thou hast caused me to put my trust. And now, Lord, let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant be established, and do as thou hast said. Thou hast put it into my heart to desire to be a good soldier, and to fight thy battles against all the enemies of thy crown and dignity. O thou glorious Captain of my salvation, arm me for my daily warfare with satan. He is too cunning for me; O my God, teach me his devices. He is too mighty for me, but the seed of the woman hath bruised his head; yes, almighty Jesus, thou hast destroyed the devil and his works. I believe in thy victory. O let me partake of its fruits, and daily bring thee honor and renown by my victories. Make me strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, that I may not fear satan: Send me out against him armed with thine invincible armor. Strengthen me, O my God, that I faint not through the length or sharpness of the battle, but enable me to persevere, till thou discharge me from the war. Thus in a constant dependence upon thee would I fight the good fight of faith, keeping up communion with thee in every battle, and growing more acquainted with my wants, and more thankful for every

supply. O my loving Jesus, increase my fellowship with thee. I desire to war a good warfare, and every thing needful for it is from thee. From thy fulness I expect it, and when I receive it, I would use it to thy glory. Hear, Lord, and answer me for thy mercies sake. *Amen, and Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

The believer kept by the power of God perseveres in his holy walk, and victorious warfare.

AFTER the believer has made a great progress in his walk, and has been very successful in his warfare, yet he is not out of the reach of any temptation. He is still liable to be stopped in the way of duty. His enemies may cheat him by some stratagem, or gain some advantage over him by open force. While he is attending to these things, as they come before him in his daily experience, a thought will often arise---

I am afraid my profession will at last come to nothing, and I shall be a cast-away. I feel so much corruption working in my duties, and my heart is so ready to revolt and to turn from the Lord in every battle, that I cannot help being uneasy about my final state. How can I, it is not in me to hold out and persevere against so much opposition from within and without? What signifies my resolution to walk forward, or to fight for an uncertain crown? I think I gain no ground. Mine own carnal will plagues me, and I love ease and quiet, as much as ever. My corruptions seem as many, and mine enemies as strong as they were: One day, I fear, I shall
perish

perish by their hands. My heart faints at the thought. My courage fails me. O wretched man that I am, Where, to whom shall I look for strength to enable me to hold out unto the end?

No believer is absolutely free from such an attack ; and there are seasons very favourable to it. If his mind be in heaviness through manifold temptations, and be reasoning legally upon them. If he be under the hidings of the Lord's countenance, or in a time of desertion. If he be fallen into any great sin, perhaps his old besetting sin; if the guilt of it be upon his conscience, and the indignation of God be heavy upon him: Then such thoughts find easy admittance ; and if they be indulged, they greatly distress the believer : for they directly assault his faith, and strike at the very being of his hope. As these graces are weakened, he moves slowly ; and if unbelief prevail, there is a stop put to his progress in the heavenly road.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who has made ample provision for victory over this temptation. The principles before insisted on are now to be brought into practice. Here is a fresh occasion to try their power and influence, and to make it appear, that in these distressing circumstances the Father has given his children good ground to rely upon his unchangeable love. He has revealed to them the immutability of his counsel and of his oath, that when they have fled

fled to Jesus for refuge, they may comfort their hearts and say—I have been afraid of falling away, but it is without reason: for I have still immutable things to trust in—although to my sense and feeling every thing seems to make against me, yet God has promised not to leave me nor forsake me. O that I may honor his promise, and without doubting rely upon his faithful arm to make it good.

Consider then, O my soul, the principles of the doctrine of Christ. Review them carefully. Thou seest what influence they have upon every step of thy walk, and how mighty they are through God to carry thee through all thy difficulties. O study then the perfect freeness and the absolute sufficiency of the salvation of Jesus. Read and mark the bonds and securities, which a faithful God has given thee to trust in, and not to be afraid. The time to honor them most is to believe them, when thou hast the least sensible evidence: for that is the strongest faith. If thou canst believe upon his bare word, and it is a very good warrant, thy feet shall stand firm upon the rock, and thy goings shall be well ordered: and that thou mayest believe this in the hardest trials God informs thee, that thy continuance in grace does not depend on thyself, “Thou standest by faith”: and faith should direct thee to what God has undertaken and has promised to do for thee. He would have thee to place

place the confidence of thy heart upon his tried word, which is a never failing foundation, and if thou wast to build all thy hopes of persevering upon it, it would quiet thy fears and comfort thy heart. Thou wouldst then see that God has not left thee to thyself to stand or fall, but has engaged never to leave thee nor forsake thee. He has declared, he will not turn away from thee to do thee good, and he will put his fear into thy heart, and thou shalt not turn away from him. View thy case in this comfortable light, and while thou art considering the safety of thy persevering, as revealed in scripture for the ground of thy faith, may every promise lead thee to trust more in God, and to trust less to thyself, and then the snare which was laid for thee will be broken, and thou wilt be delivered.

But take heed of carrying thine opinions to scripture, and of forcing it to speak for them. Beware of that common mistake: and beware of human systems. Pay no regard to men or names. Simply attend to the promises of God concerning thy persevering. Thy present trial has convinced thee, that thou canst not depend on thy own faithfulness: this therefore is the time to learn practically the faithfulness of God, and to improve thy faith in it from such scripture arguments, as these.

First the nature of the divine covenant, which is not only the unchangeable will of the eternal

Three,

Three, but is also their agreement confirmed by oath concerning the heirs of promise.

The father loved them as his children, freely, with an everlasting love: he chose them, and gave them to his Son: he engaged to keep them by his power through faith unto salvation.

The Son accepted them, and wrote all their names in his book (not one of them therefore can be lost) he undertook to be made man, and to live and die for them; to rise from the dead, to ascend, and to intercede for them: and he sitteth as king mediator upon the throne, till every one of them be brought to glory.

The holy Spirit covenanted to carry into execution the purposes of the Father's love, and to apply the blessings of the Son's salvation. He undertook to quicken the heirs of promise, to call them effectually, to guide, to strengthen, to sanctify, and to comfort them; yea he is not to leave them, till the number of the elect be perfected. **Therefore HE ABIDES WITH THEM FOR EVER.**

In this covenant the eternal Three have undertaken for every heir of promise—to do all *for* him, and all *in* him—for the means, and for the end—so that not one of them can perish: for faithfulness to the covenant is one of the highest honors of the Godhead: “I am Jehovah your
“ Alehim, which **KEEPETH** covenant, I will
“ **EVER BE MINDFUL** of my covenant—My co-
“ venant

"covenant will I NOT BREAK, nor alter the
 "thing that is gone out of my mouth." What
 strong consolation is there in these words! Study
 them, O my soul, that by them thy faith may be
 established, and they may do thee good, like a
 medicine.

Thou art afraid of falling away; but the bless-
 ed Trinity have undertaken to hold thee up, and
 their covenant engagements are to be the ground
 of thy believing, that they will fulfill what they
 have promised. Observe and adore the good-
 ness of God; see, how he meets thy doubts and
 answers thine objections---"An oath for confir-
 "mation is among men an end of all strife:
 "wherein God willing more abundantly to shew
 "to the heirs of promise the immutability of
 "his counsel confirmed it by an oath: that by
 "two immutable things, in which it was impos-
 "sible for God to lie, we might have a strong
 "consolation, who have fled for refuge" to Jesus.
 Thy faith should run parallel with this promise,
 and should safely trust as far as it warrants thee;
 now it gives thee sufficient reason to conclude,
 that thy state before God is immutable, and that
 he has determined thou shalt not fall away and
 perish: For observe

Secondly, His design in the covenant. He
 knew thy frame, thine infirmities, and thy temp-
 tations, and therefore he provided the covenant,
 and promised the blessings of it upon oath, for

thy sake--to end ALL strife in thy conscience--and to give thee strong consolation. This was his mind and will. He revealed it for thee, to settle thy heart in believing, and to administer to thee great comfort. Weigh attentively each of these particulars, and then say, what more could have been done to satisfy thee of thine immutable persevering.

"But thou thinkest, "Such trials as thine are
"uncommon, and perhaps not provided for in
"the covenant, and therefore it can be no dis-
"paragement to the divine faithfulness if thou
"shouldst fall away." How can this be, since the everlasting covenant is ORDERED IN ALL THINGS, and on the part of God is absolutely SURE--nothing that concerns thee is left out of it--not a single hair of thy head--thy trials are all appointed and ordered, and the end also which they are to answer.

Perhaps from the clear evidence of the divine record thou art convinced of the covenant of God to save the heirs of promise, and of his engaging to keep them that they shall never perish, but thou art afraid thou art not in the covenant, nor an heir of promise. From whence arise thy fears? From scripture? No. All scripture is on thy side. Hast thou not fled, as a poor sinner, to Jesus for refuge? Hast thou not acknowledged his divine nature, and his all-sufficient work? And though thou art now tempted to doubt, yet
bid " 4 some

some faith is still fighting against unbelief? These are covenant blessings. O look up then to Jesus—why not THY Jesus? But however look to him—keep looking on—and he will give thee reason to be ashamed of thy doubts and fears.

But the Lord hides himself from me, and therefore I fear I am not in his favor. This objection is answered in the charter of grace—I WILL NOT TURN AWAY FROM DOING THEE GOOD. He has hid his face, and thou art troubled: this trouble is for good. It should put thee upon inquiring into the reason of God's hiding himself. It should humble thee, and should exercise thy faith upon such a scripture as this—"For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth and smote him, I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart: I have seen his ways and will heal him, I will lead him also and will restore comforts to him and to his mourners." Although he hid himself, yet he had love to his people—although he smote them, yet it was a fatherly correction. But

Thou fearest, God not only hides his face, but has also quite forsaken thee: He may, as to thy sense and feeling, but not as to his own purpose, which changeth not. Hear how he speaks to thee, and silences thy doubts—"For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee: in a little wrath I hid

"hid my face from thee for a moment, but with
 "everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee,
 "saith the Lord thy Redeemer." How gracious
 is thy God! What infinite mercy is it, that he
 should give thee such promises, so suited to the
 trials of thy faith, to preserve thee under them,
 and to bring thee out of them! Read carefully,
 over and over again, these promises: and may
 every reading of them disperse the cloud of un-
 belief, until thy soul be enlivened with the light
 of the Lord's loving countenance.

But perhaps thou art in a worse case, as to
 thine own apprehension: "Thou thinkest God
 is incensed against me, and justly—he has cast
 me off, and I can expect no more favor at his
 hand: once indeed I thought he loved me, but
 I have fallen into a great sin—an old, besetting
 sin—my conscience accuses me of committing it
 against light and conviction—it is a foul black
 spot, such as is not to be found upon the chil-
 dren of God."

Thou art fallen: And wilt thou lie there, and
 not be raised up again? Thou art under guilt:
 And wilt thou nurse it, and add sin to sin? Ag-
 gravate the sinfulness of thy fall, as much as thou
 wilt, yet thou canst not be truly humbled for it,
 but by returning to God, and by trusting in the
 plenteous redemption, that is in Christ Jesus.
 Then thy heart will be softened and melted into
 love, for grace will have its due honor, and thou
 wilt

wilt see what the scripture says of thy case in its divine truth and majesty. Thou wilt feel thyself exactly what the word of God says of thee—a fallen sinful creature—in thee (that is in thy flesh) dwelleth no good thing—so that there is not any sin, but thou art capable of falling into it through the strength of temptation. So long as thou art in the body, the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; in this conflict thou mayest fall, but the covenant secures thee from perishing. Abraham the father of the faithful fell—the friend of God fell into the same sin again and again. Moses fell: so did David. Peter forewarned fell: so did all the apostles. Yet they were believers, and they did recover themselves out of the snare of the devil: For whatever sin thou art fallen into may be pardoned, as theirs was. “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin”—there is in it an infinite virtue to wash away every spot and stain—it is a public fountain—it stands open for daily use, that believers may wash and be clean—it is always, at every given moment effectual—it **CLEANSETH**, in the present tense, now—to-day, while it is called to-day: For there is nothing new to be suffered on the part of Christ, in order to take away sin. He put it away by the sacrifice of himself: The Father accepted it; and thus proclaims the free forgiveness of all the trespasses, for which the atonement was made:—“I will be merciful to shew
“ their

“their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” Why dost thou reject the comfort of this promise? It is suited to thy present distress, and is the remedy for it. Thou art fallen into unrighteousness—God says, I will be merciful to it. Thou art fallen into sins and iniquities—he says, I will remember them no more. Thou mayest remember thy fall, but let it be in order to rise from it by faith. It should teach thee thy need of the blood of the Lamb. It should bring thee to sprinkle it afresh upon thy conscience, and to live safe and happy under the protection of it. Thus apply it to thy fall and thou wilt repent aright; thou wilt be truly humbled and made more watchful. Thou wilt live more by faith in thy covenant God, wilt glorify more the infinitely perfect salvation of Jesus, and wilt be more dependent upon the grace and keeping of the eternal Spirit.

Consider then, O my soul, the rich, abounding, super-abounding grace of thy God in making such a provision for raising thee up, when fallen into sin. He intended the promises in the covenant should be the means of thy recovery, as they give thee good ground still to trust in a covenant God, and in his immutable counsel and oath. O lie not then in guilt. Rest not in unbelief. Give not place to the devil. The Lord has put words into thy mouth, may he help thee in the faith of thy heart.

heart to take them up, and say—" Rejoice not
 " against me, O mine enemy, when I fall, I shall
 " arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall
 " be a light unto me: I will bear the indigna-
 " tion of the Lord, because I have sinned
 " against him, until he plead my cause, and exe-
 " cute judgment for me; he will bring me
 " forth to the light, and I shall behold his righ-
 " teousness." If the Lord open to thee the rich
 treasury of grace in this scripture, and enable
 thee to depend on the ample security here given
 for raising thee from thy fall, then consider in
 the

Third place, the express promises made in the
 covenant, that the believer shall not perish, but
 shall have everlasting life. These promises are
 not conditional, made to the believer upon cer-
 tain terms, as if upon doing his part God would
 do his also: for he does not stand by his own
 will, or strength, or faithfulness—he does not
 hold out to the end by his own diligence and
 watchfulness in means—or receive the crown of
 glory as the merited reward of any works of
 righteousness done by him. The promises are all
 of free grace, not dependent on man's will, but
 on God's; not yea and nay, but of absolutely
 certain fulfillment. They were all made in the
 covenant to Christ the head, and are already
 made good to Christ, as the head, for the use of
 his members—" For ALL the promises of God
 " are

“are in him, yea, and in him, *Amen.*” He was given for the covenant of his people, and as such, he undertook to do all their works for them, and in them, and therefore all the promised blessings of the covenant are laid up in his fulness—“in him they are yea”—and laid up, as the head has the fulness of the senses for the use of his members—“in him they are, *Amen.*” He communicates the promised blessings freely, not conditionally; by believing, and not for working: “Therefore (says the apostle, speaking of Christ’s righteousness) it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.”

In this sovereign manner and style runs the covenant, and every promise in it—I WILL BE THEIR GOD, of mine own mere motion and grace, and according to the good pleasure of mine own will—AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE—my will shall make them willing in the day of my power: for I will work in them both to will and to do: yea, *I will be* a Father unto them and *they shall be* my sons and daughters, saith the Lord almighty. The word FATHER relates to his children, and expresses the unchangeable love of his heart towards them: it is a dear covenant name, and denotes the inseparable connection between him and his children: whenever they hear it, it should always excite in them an idea of his everlasting affection. He

loves his family as a Father, and loves every one of them with the same almighty love. He cannot change. He cannot cease to be a Father, and they cannot cease to be his children. His name is a security to them, that they cannot perish: for if one of them could, they all might. And then his covenant purpose to bring many sons unto glory would be defeated--his relation to them as their Father would be broken--he would be a Father without children--he would deny them the promised blessings--he would forget to be gracious to them--his will concerning them would change or would be over-ruled by some opposite will--and his great plan in the covenant would come to nothing. But these things cannot possibly be. He is the Father of his children, and he has engaged, by promise and oath, to love, to bless, and to keep them for ever. Out of perfect love he gave them to his Son, who undertook to be their Saviour: he came and was made man, Jehovah incarnate, to live and die for them. He was so delighted with them (for he has all their names written in his book) and with the work, that he was straitened till it was accomplished. Blessings on him for ever, it is finished. The royal Saviour is upon the throne, almighty to save his dear redeemed. He would lose his name, which is above every name, the honors of his salvation would fade away upon his head, and the glories of his offices

fices would come to nothing, if one whom Jesus lived and died to save should perish. But it is not possible. Whom he loves, he loves unto the end. "I give unto them, says he, eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." They are his seed--and it was covenanted, that he should see his seed. They are the travail of his soul--and he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. How can he be satisfied, if any one of them should be lost? He prayed--"Holy Father, keep through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one." And the Father always heard him. He prayed, that they might be with him, where he is, to see his glory: and the holy Spirit covenanted to bring them to it--he undertook as his name *Spirit* imports, to breathe life into them, to call, to convert them, to keep them, and to give them every thing needful for their spiritual life. How can they fail of coming to glory, being thus kept for it by the power of God? The holy Spirit would lose his name *Spirit* or breath of life, and his office, which is to abide with, and to dwell forever in the elect people of God; if any one of them should die from God, and perish. Thus there is full security given by the names and offices of the Trinity, that believers shall be kept from falling away. The Father cannot be without his

children. The glory of Jesus would fade away, if one of his redeemed was plucked out of his hand. The divine honors of the Spirit of life would be eclipsed, if he was to forsake his charge, and to suffer any of the redeemed to fall into hell. But these things cannot be. The will of the Father, Son, and Spirit, is the same concerning the salvation of the elect, which is as secure as covenant-bonds and oaths can make it.

Art thou then, O my soul, established in this great truth? Dost thou yield to the power of the evidence which the blessed Trinity have vouchsafed to give thee? Meditate carefully upon it for the growth of thy faith. Search the scriptures, and observe how clearly God declares his fixed purpose to keep his people, and to hold them up unto the end. The great preacher of the gospel in the Old Testament church speaks thus of the unchangeable will of a covenant God—“The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.” A great preacher in the New Testament church has confirmed the same precious truth. He is treating of the golden chain of salvation, and shewing how inseparable every link of it is, and in this prospect he triumphs—“Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth,
“who

“ who is he that condemneth! It is Christ that
 “ died, yea rather that is risen again, who is
 “ even at the right hand of God, who also
 “ maketh intercession for us. Who shall sepa-
 “ rate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribula-
 “ tion, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or
 “ nakedness, or sword? Nay, in all these things
 “ we are more than conquerors through him that
 “ loveth us. By the mouth of these two infal-
 lible witnesses the truth is established—they de-
 pose, that the covenant is immutable, and that
 nothing can separate believers from the love,
 wherewith God loves them in his Son. O most
 comfortable doctrine! How encouraging is it in
 any undertaking to set about it with certain hope
 of success. How animating in our Christian
 walk, how reviving in the dark and difficult
 paths of it, to have God’s promise, that he will
 keep us, and bring us to an happy end! How
 pleasing is it to go on by faith in our warfare,
 casting all our care upon him, who careth for
 us! How delightful is it to trust his promise, and
 daily to find it made good—“ Ye are kept by the
 “ power of God through faith unto eternal sal-
 “ vation.” Here, O my soul, thou art to seek
 for strong consolation amidst the trials and diffi-
 culties of thy walk. Thou art afraid of falling
 —God has engaged to hold thee up. Thou hast
 been tempted to think thou shouldst fall quite
 away, and come to nothing—but God says, thou
 art

art PRESERVED in Christ Jesus--His covenant and oath are made to confirm the faith of thy persevering. Thou standest by faith, and thy faith should lead thee to rest safely on what God says about thy standing: And for thy faith itself, its continuing, its increasing, thou hast his infallible faithfulness to depend upon. Thou art weak--but he keeps thee by his power. Thine enemies are strong--but none of them shall pluck thee out of his hand. Thou art willing to join them, and to depart from the living God--but he has promised to put his fear into thy heart. and thou shalt not depart from him. He meets with thy doubts, and answers all thine objections in a word--For he hath said, I WILL NEVER LEAVE THEE, NOR FORSAKE THEE.

Be of good courage then, O my soul, and go forward, strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and he will bring thee safe to the end of thy journey. He has promised it. Put thyself into his hands, and give him the glory of keeping thee. He will hold up thy goings in his paths, that thy footsteps slip not. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore. How then canst thou miscarry, safe under his guidance and keeping? Commit thy ways unto the Lord. Do it simply. Look up by faith to his promise, and then lean on his arm. Thus going on thou mayest

mayest rejoice at every step in the Lord thy God. He has left thee a sweet hymn upon the subject; with which the weary travellers to Sion have often refreshed their spirits. Take it up, and sing it after them. Study it. Mix faith with it: And with perfect reliance on what God, who cannot lie, has promised in it to do for thee, sing and make melody with it in thy heart unto the Lord—

“In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of
 “red wine: I the Lord do keep it: I will water
 “it every moment: Lest any hurt it, I will keep
 “it night and day: Fury is not in me: Who
 “would set the briers and thorns against me in
 “battle? I would go through them, I would
 “burn them together. Or will he take hold of
 “my strength, that he may make peace with
 “me; then he shall make peace with me. He
 “shall cause them that come of Jacob to take
 “root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and shall
 “fill the face of the world with fruit.”

O my good God and faithful keeper, I do believe these precious promises; help mine unbelief. Forgive my distrusting thy faithfulness, and enable me steadfastly to rely upon it for the future. What return can I make unto thee for grafting me into the true vine! O Lord this love surpasseth knowledge. I was fit for nothing but the fire, and thou hast brought me into the vineyard of red wine, and hast enabled me to trust in
 of that

that blood of the Lamb, which cheereth God and man. On this my soul lives, and is refreshed. And being through grace *in* him, and living *upon* him, I bless thee, holy Father, for thy faithful promise to keep me unto the end. I am still an easy prey to all those who seek the hurt of my soul; but thou hast given me thy word, that lest any hurt me, thou wilt keep me night and day. I confess, gracious God, that I have dishonored thee by doubting of thy love, and by questioning its unchangeableness, but now I believe that fury is not in thee to any one branch in the true vine. There is love, and nothing but love in all thy dealings with Christ, and with his. Forgive my guilty fears, and suspicions of thy forsaking me, arising from my weakness and from the strength of mine enemies: I now see that thou canst as easily consume them, as fire can briars and thorns. Lord increase my faith in thy promised strength, that I may lay hold of it for peace, and may keep fast hold of it for maintaining peace with thee always and by all means. O grant me this my good God, that my faith may work more by love. Let me take deeper root in Jesus, and grow up more into him, blossoming and budding and flourishing in his vineyard. I depend upon thee to keep me a branch in him, and to make me a fruitful branch, bringing forth plentifully the fruits of righteousness which are by Christ Jesus

to the glory and praise of God. I believe the work is thine--thou hast begun it--and thou wilt carry it on unto the day of the Lord Jesus. Thou art faithful to thy word and work. In dependence upon thy faithfulness I hope to persevere. Let it be done unto me according to thy promises, wherein thou hast caused me to put my trust. Hear, Lord, and answer for thy mercies sake in Jesus, to whom with thee and the eternal Spirit, three persons in one God-head be equal glory and praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*

CHAP.

This is the privilege of believers in Jesus. They are at peace. Their principles are mighty. The God to support and comfort them in the hour

CHAP. XV.

The believer finishes his course, and enters into rest.

THE believer is now happily arrived at the verge of life. Goodness and mercy have followed him all his days, and will not lose their glory by forsaking him at the close of them. It is appointed unto all men once to die, and his fixed time is at hand. The body is returning to dust, and the spirit must appear before the throne of God. In this trying hour he trusts to the principles, which had carried him through life, and he finds them a perfect preservative from the fear and from the power of death. The same faith in a reconciled God and loving Father keeps peace in his conscience, and love in his heart. He depends upon the atonement of Immanuel, and is safe: he wraps himself up in the robe of Immanuel's righteousness, and is happy. He knows he shall be found in Jesus, when he stands before God; and therefore he looks upon death as his friend, and meets it with a hope full of glory and immortality.

This is the privilege of believers in Jesus. They die in peace. Their principles are mighty thro' God to support and comfort them in the hour

hour of death! Reader, are these principles thine? Examine carefully. Come to a point in this matter: for it is of infinite and eternal moment. What is thy state? Art thou prepared to die? Perhaps thou art openly profane. And what wilt thou do upon thy death-bed, when the divine law accuses thee, justice condemns thee, and the terrors of hell take hold of thee? The stings of guilt at such a time will be worse in the conscience, than all the tortures that thy sick body can possibly feel. But if thy conscience be asleep—O what a dreadful death! if thou go out of the world with thine eyes shut, and open them not till thou find the flames of hell about thee.

Perhaps thou art not afraid, because thou hast a decent outside: O take care of trusting in thyself, lest thou shouldst have thy portion with the openly profane. If thou make what thou art, or hast, any ground of thy hope before God, if thou depend on thy duties or righteousness, or join them with the work of Christ, and meet death in this confidence—How dreadful will be thy mistake! How inevitable thy ruin! Such false hopes are thus described—“Behold all ye
 “that kindle a fire and compass yourselves about
 “with sparks, walk in the light of your fire,
 “and in the sparks that ye have kindled”—But mind the end—thus saith the Lord—“This shall
 “ye

“ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in
“sorrow.” And together with them will the
open enemy of God and his Christ lie down. A
denier of revelation is brought to the bed of lan-
guishing---a slow lingering distemper is carrying
him off---the physician has given him over---his
disease is mortal, and he is convinced of it. But
alas ! he has no preparation for death and judg-
ment. He has some Christian friends and they
talk freely to him about his eternal state, but he
will hear nothing of his guilt, or of his want of
a Saviour. They get a minister of Christ to visit
him, and he speaks to him of sin, which is the
transgression of the holy law, and of the justice
of God which is engaged to give transgressors
their due, and of the impossibility of his finding
mercy at the judgment seat, until every demand
be satisfied, which law and justice have upon
him: He tries to persuade the dying man of the
Godhead of Jesus, and of the divine work of
Jesus, but in vain. He sets at nought the mini-
ster's advice, and with a hardened and impeni-
tent heart replies---Be it as it will with me in
eternity, I'll have nothing to do with your Christ.
So he died. We need not follow him to the
judgment seat to know what became of his soul,
The infallible record has declared what will be
the portion of the unbelieving. Their misery is
as certain as the truth of God. O reader ex-
amine

mine thyself: for he that believeth not is condemned already: because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Perhaps thou art in name a Christian, but what thinkest thou of Christ? The grand heresy of this day is about his person, and if thou art fallen into it, there is no hope in thy death. Is he Jehovah? O leave not this matter undetermined. The truth of his word and the glory of his work depend entirely upon this one point; so does thy peace and comfort: For if thou believe him to be any thing but the self-existent God, thou shalt die in thy sins. His sufferings cannot avail for thy pardon, nor his obedience for thy righteousness, unless he be Jehovah. Without faith in him, as the self-existent Saviour, death will find thee under guilt, and judgment will leave thee among the enemies of God and his Christ.

Whatever evil there is in death to terrify, whatever pain to hurt; the blessed Jesus by the grace of God tasted it for all his. The grace of the Father gave him to be the surety for his people unto death. He died for them, and as truly tasted death, as ever the nicest palate tasted meat or drink. But it was like a taste--of short duration--it was not possible, that he should be holden long under the bands of death. He rose again on the third day: And because he lives, believers in him shall live also. They are partakers

takers of his victory over death, and share in all its blessings. The sentence of the broken law is repealed. They do not die to bear the punishment of sin. Christ sustained that. The pains and agonies of death fell upon him—"The sorrows of death," says he, "compassed me; and the pains of hell gat hold upon me." He was a just man, who had no reason to fear death, but being found in the place of his people with their sins upon him, he was to bear every thing that was dreadful in death. Hence his agonies at the approach of it—"My heart," says he, "is fore-pained within me, and the terrors of death are fallen upon me: Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me." He endured those inconceivable horrors to deliver them, who through fear of death had been all their life-time subject to bondage. But the bondage is at an end, when they believe in his victory. Their fears are dispelled, when they see the glory of the battle, which he fought and won--How by dying he took away sin, satisfied justice, removed the curse, conquered death, broke its sceptre, took out its sting, and left nothing in it but what is friendly to them. In these believing views they can meet death with confidence: For they cannot taste that in death, which Christ tasted. He felt it, that they might not feel it: He died in agonies that they might die in peace. O my
most

most loving and precious Jesus, I believe this, let not any unbelief in me dishonour thy complete conquest over all that is fearful or painful in dying. My times are in thy hand: When thou art pleased to bring them to an end, let me find death swallowed up in victory: O that I may then triumph with thy redeemed—What can separate us from the love of Christ—shall the sting of death, or the fear of death, or of satan, or of hell? No, thanks be to God—these were all conquered when Jesus died; subdued for ever, when he rose again. And he has left us many precious promises, that we trusting in him shall share in his victory, and find the blessings of it in the hour of death.

Attend then, O my soul, to what he has engaged to bestow upon his dying disciples, as the fruit of his death; and give him credit, not doubting but he will make it good. Live now in the comfort of his promises, and fear not. The almighty Jesus will be with thee, and thou shalt conquer with him in the hour of death. Observe his word, which cannot be broken—"I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plague, O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." The ransom which he here engages to pay for his, he paid, as their surety, and he daily applies it to them, as their Saviour. Upon quoting this pro-

mise,

mise, and finding by faith the happy fulfillment of it, mark how the apostle rejoices with the Corinthians in the near view of death—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law: but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord." O thou most glorious conqueror, almighty Jesus, eternal thanks be to thee, that the law cannot accuse, sin cannot condemn, death cannot sting thy redeemed. Thou hast promised to make them happy in death, and faithful is thy word. The beloved John is one of thy witnesses—"I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord:" Write it for the use of my disciples, that it may be the ground of their faith when they come to die: I promise to make them blessed in their death: being IN me, members under me their head, and living IN the Lord, they shall die IN the Lord: they shall have union with me, and communion too, when they are dying: the hour of death, the time of their dissolution shall be a season of great blessedness: they shall have my presence in their last moments: I will walk with them through the valley of the shadow of death, and they shall fear no evil: my rod and my staff shall then comfort them. O my God, make thy word good. Sweet Jesus, write this promise upon my heart. O help me to mix
faith

faith with it, that when mine appointed time is come, I may experience the blessedness of dying in the Lord. I wait for the time, it is not far off. O keep me, Jesus, till that hour. Keep me, Jesus, in that hour. Save me through life and death; and bless me with thine eternal salvation. Hear, and answer for thy mercies sake. *Amen.*

Meditate, O my soul, upon these blessings. Consider, how great, how many they are. Consider also thine unworthiness: Thou art less than the least of them. And yet God has set his love upon thee, and has given thee the greatest of them. He has called thee to the knowledge of his love in Jesus, and has shed it abroad in thy heart. He has set thee in the way that leads to the eternal enjoyment of his love, has promised to keep thee all the way, and to bless thee at the end of it. He will make thee blessed in death, and blessed for evermore. Hitherto thou hast found him faithful. Not one good thing has failed, which thou didst ask in faith, and wait for at his hands—Review all his dealings with thee, and see what infinite mercy there was in them. He made thy walk prosperous, thy warfare successful, thy crosses sanctified. Thou hast not taken a false step, but when thou wast not living by the faith of the Son of God. O trust him then and be not afraid. His love has brought thee thus far: He has led thee in the right way to the verge of life, and he declares he will not leave thee nor forsake thee in

the hour of death. Fear not to look down? Fear not to go down with Jesus into the grave. He has promised—"I will be with thee?" and where-ever he is there is heaven. He is with his dying friends, and they are blessed indeed. They die in faith—they live by faith in death—and as soon as faith ceases, they live with their God for ever. The body falls asleep, and rests safely till the morning of the resurrection. The soul in a moment enters into the joy of its Lord—a joy like his—pure and holy—a fulness of joy—every sense has its proper object—enjoys it—and is satisfied for ever. O what will the heart feel in this blessedness! What acknowledgments will it make to God and the Lamb. To praise him for the wonders of his grace in bringing to that glory will be the happy employment of eternity. To see him as he is in his divine majesty is heaven. For how great communications of his love the being ever with him, and ever like him will make the soul capable of, we cannot perfectly conceive. These things are at present too high and heavenly, even for our thoughts. By faith we sometimes have a little glimpse of the glory to be revealed, and it eclipses all the grandeur of the world. There are happy moments, when we are permitted to behold the king in his beauty, when he discovers his matchless loveliness, and gives us a taste of the heavenly feast: at such blessed seasons the soul is bowed down

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and humbled to the dust, adoring the infinite mercy and goodness of God. If there be so much of heaven in these manifestations of divine love, what must the full enjoyment be? We may suppose a happy soul, entered into rest thus meditating upon the grace, which brought it to that glory.

Blessing and thanks without ceasing be unto Father, Son, and Spirit, through whose sovereign grace I was chosen to this blessedness, and am now brought to the perfect and everlasting enjoyment of it. This communion with the Godhead through Jesus is as far beyond my former thoughts of it, as the heaven is above the earth. How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty, that the most high and holy one would thus communicate his love unto sinful creatures. Glory be to thee, holy Father, for predestinating me to the adoption of children, and for the free gift of the heavenly inheritance. Glory be to thee incarnate Jehovah, for thy covenant-undertakings for me, for thy life, death, and complete salvation. I worship thee, I glorify thee, O God the Holy Ghost, for quickening me, for teaching me and enabling me through believing in Jesus to experience the love of the Father, and for bringing me to enjoy his endless blessings. Surely the goodness and mercy of the holy Trinity have followed me all the days of my life; were with me when I walked thro' the valley of the shadow of death, and are now my most blessed

portion

portion in the house of the Lord. I am made a pillar in the temple of my God, and am to go no more out. O what exceeding riches of grace are these! What has God done for me? Angels, and brethren, help me to praise. My debt is immense. No saved sinner can owe him more. It is growing every moment. My praises pay none of it. With my thankful heart, and it is all thankfulness, I only acknowledge his infinite goodness, and own myself his eternal debtor. Blessing and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever.

Reader, art thou in the way which leads to this glory? If not, may the Lord be merciful unto thee, and bring thee unto it.

If thou art seeking to be set right in it: Remember Jesus is THE WAY. May his good Spirit enable thee to believe in his word and to trust in it till thou attain to the salvation of thy soul.

If thou art in the way, and hast communion with the Father thro' faith in the atonement and righteousness of his Son, art thou maintaining it in thy daily walk, and improving it in every duty? And art thou going on thy way rejoicing in God? If thou art sorrowing for outward crosses, or burdened with inward conflicts, canst thou nevertheless find joy and peace in believing? Dost thou march on,

victorious in thy warfare, keeping up communion with God against all opposition of thy spiritual enemies? And is thy faith established upon the faithfulness of God, that he will carry on his own work in thee unto the day of the Lord Jesus? In this faith art thou now living? And in this faith dost thou hope to die. Has God indeed done these wonders for thee? O bless him then with me, and let us magnify his name together. Be thou exalted Lord, in us, and by us. Every day we would grow up into nearer and holier communion with thee. We desire to be more like thee, and to shew forth more of thy lovely image before men. O help us to praise thee better with our lips and lives. By the communion of the holy Ghost we would communicate more by faith with the Son in his salvation, and with the father in his love. O holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, in this divine fellowship we hope to find our heaven upon earth: Let it be growing and increasing, helped forward by all means, and if it please thee, by these volumes. Make them, Lord, the instrument under thee of leading thy people into the right way; and of establishing them in it. Accompany the reading of them with the teaching of thy Spirit, and to the advancement of thy glory. I present the books unto thee, ever glorious Jesus, and lay them at thy feet. Thou knowest my heart: accept them graciously, as a public
acknow-

acknowledgement for inestimable mercies. In thy great compassion overlook the faults in them : what is agreeable to the scripture is thine own. Make use of it to thy praise. I devote myself, my body, and soul, my tongue and pen, all I have and am to thy service. I would not look upon myself, as any longer mine own, but being bought with a price, I would glorify thee in the use of all thy gifts and graces. With thee I desire to walk through life. In thine arms I hope to die. Through thee I expect soon to enjoy perfect communion with the Father, and the Spirit : Therefore into thy hands I commend myself. Keep me in the right way. Guide me to the end of it, that I may finish my course with joy, and join thy redeemed in giving to thee with the Father and the Spirit, the three in one Jehovah, equal and everlasting praise. Hear, Lord, and answer. *Amen.*

12 JY 62

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in the God of their salvation.

This is the great gospel privilege, which is granted to believers, as belie-

ers, and promised to them in the flesh, and fulfilled in the spirit.

conveyed, springing from the grace in the giver, and received not from any

qualification in themselves, but entirely from his own bounty, continued and

THE present treatise is a continuation of some remarks formerly published concerning the experience of a true Christian, who, quickened by the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, lives by faith, and who is enabled to go forward in his walk by the faith of the Son of God. There was one volume upon this subject, entitled, *The Life of Faith*, and some years after, two volumes on *The Walk of Faith*: In which the divine helps and supports were considered great and many, not only for the establishment of believers in the way, but also for their happiness every step of it, that they might rejoice in the Lord always, yea, with such a fulness

fulnels of joy, as to make them triumph in the God of their salvation.

This is the grand gospel privilege, which is granted to believers, as believers, and promised to them in the freest and fullest manner that any grant can be conveyed, springing from sovereign grace in the giver, and received not from any qualification in themselves, but entirely from his own bounty, continued and increased with all the rich and ripe fruits of faith to the praise of the glory of the grace of God.

It has been long observed, and much lamented, that there are very few of these happy believers, who give such a perfect credit to the promises of God in Christ, as to rest their hearts upon his faithfulness, without any doubt or wavering : They do not trust so far as the promises warrant them, which stops the exercise of faith, and hinders the growth of the spiritual life. Weak faith has little fruit. Strong faith improves love to God, loving obedience, patient suffering, persevering warfare, and the other fruits of

of the Spirit: Indeed for this very purpose it is commanded, that we might trust and not be afraid: And there are promises made to them who obey the command, and all things promised are possible to them who believe: For there is strength sufficient in the promiser to make faith grow, yea, to make it grow exceedingly: And he has done it, giving us a happy instance in the church of the Theſſalonians, in which persecution raged, but faith was victorious, and patience triumphant. It has pleased God to give us in the scriptures many encouragements for the growth of faith, which are in the following treatise set before the reader; that we may honor his word, and trust in it at all times; especially when appearances make against their being fulfilled. Then it is high worship, against hope to believe in hope, as the father of the faithful did: And they are his children, and follow the steps of his faith, who when sin is felt in its defilement, in its guilt, in the sense of inward corruptions, and of strong temptations,

tations, in the many troubles of life, in the infirmities of age, and in the approach of death, put their whole trust and confidence in the promises of God. Nothing else is appointed, either to bring in the peace of God to the conscience, or to keep it in. God only in such trials can be a safe refuge, and a sure defence, and faith looking at what he has engaged to give, secures the promised help to the glory of God. Under these several heads something is here offered from the scriptures of truth to encourage a more steadfast reliance on the divine faithfulness, than one commonly meets with. And what is said upon each head is here set before the reader, on the authority of God's word, and is also followed with fervent prayer, that the end of publishing this treatise may be answered, even, that the scriptural faith may be hereby increased, that it may abound yet more and more, and in such a great degree, as may bring the highest glory to God, the truest holiness to the heart, and the happiest experience in the life, and in
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the warfare of the Christian. May the gracious Lord, who is the author and finisher of the faith, accompany it with his Spirit to the advancement of his own praise, and to the edification of his own people. To him who keepeth promise for ever, be glory in the church, through Christ Jesus, world without end.

Amen.

THE

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THE TRIUMPH,

&c. &c.

CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTION.

WHERE there has been war, a triumph supposes a battle to have been fought, a victory to have been obtained, and the great rejoicings of the conquerors upon this occasion. The Christian has his matter of triumph, but it is spiritual. It is always in Christ, the captain of his salvation. So it is written—"Thanks be to God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ." The apostle is speaking of his preaching the gospel. He carried the sweet savor of Jesu's name from place to place; but it was not always received as a joyful sound, nor welcomed, as it deserved. He met with great opposition. The Holy Ghost witnessed that in every city, bonds and afflictions awaited him. As these abounded,

grace did much more abound. For he was carried on through persecutions, imprisonment, stoning, whipping, perils of various kinds, suffered for Christ, and Christ made him victorious over them all. He not only enabled Paul to conquer, but also made him more than conqueror—he was the blessed instrument of pulling down the strong holds of sin and Satan, and of setting up in the world, that kingdom of Jesus, which is flourishing to this day, and which will triumph to eternity. A poor weak man had all the Roman empire against him, but he did wonders. Through Christ strengthening him, he went on conquering and to conquer: And to Christ he gives all the glory; acknowledging that the gospel, his preaching it, and the success of it, was of God, the excellency of the power was of God. “Thanks be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ.” He, for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate, that as our surety he might live, and die and conquer for us. It was to the everlasting honour of his grace and mercy, that he would engage in this war, and undertake to deliver his people from the tyranny of their enemies. They were in bondage to sin—sold under sin—enslaved to diverse lusts and pleasures—living according to the course of this world—according to the prince of the power of the air, the wicked spirit, who now worketh effectually in the children

of disobedience. These tyrants were leading them captive at their will, hoping soon to have them delivered over to death, and then to everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. In this miserable state, under sin--under condemnation, we all were--guilty and helpless--not only without any means of deliverance in our own power, but without any desire of it, being tempted to dream of liberty, while we were tied and bound with the chain of our sins, and fancying that we were free, even while our enemies were waiting to exercise their utmost malice against us, by binding us with chains of everlasting darkness. O what mercies--what compassions are in our God--in our Jesus! He remembered us in this our low estate, and manifested the exceeding riches of his grace, in coming from heaven to save his people from their sins. To this end Jehovah was manifested in the flesh, as it is written, *Jer. l. 33. 34.* "The children of Israel, and the children of Judah were oppressed together, and all that took them captives held them fast, and refused to let them go: But their redeemer is strong, the Lord of hosts is his name, he shall thoroughly plead their cause." He made all our enemies his own, and fought our battles against them. He obeyed, that the broken law which stood against us might be magnified by his obedience: The penalties of it he endured, when the Lord laid

upon him the iniquities of us all. His cross was his triumphal chariot, on which he vanquished all our foes, *Col. ii. 14, 15.* He blotted out the hand writing of ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us, and he took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross: And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in that same cross. By dying on it he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and by his rising from the dead on the third day, according to the scriptures, he overcame death, and him that had the power of death, that is the devil. And now as God-man in one Christ, the almighty Saviour of his redeemed, he is seated upon his throne of grace, all his enemies being made his foot-stool, he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. Such was the battle which the Redeemer fought. Such was the victory which he obtained. The important news of it is the substance of that blessed gospel, which he ordered his apostles to preach to every creature, and which he promised to assist them in, and to be with them for that purpose to the end of the world. He is as good as his word to this day. Still faith cometh by hearing it. The holy Spirit witnesses to it, that it is the truth of God, and he applies it, and makes it the power of God unto salvation. He enables the hearers to mix such faith with it that they receive, and enjoy the happy fruits of Christ's victory. Once they
were

were dead in trespasses and sins, but now Christ hath quickened them. They were guilty, and bound over to condemnation, but the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath freed them from the law of sin and of death. Once they walked after the course of this world, but now they walk with God. Their old enemies are still fighting against them, and watching for their destruction, but they are enabled to gain daily victory over them, over the world, the flesh, and the devil, through the strength of Jesus, and through the power of his might. Their wants are many, and they are daily made more sensible of them, but they have an abundant supply of every thing that pertains to life and godliness, out of the infiniteness of God, their Saviour.

Thus far the three volumes went, which were formerly published upon this subject, entitled, *The Life of Faith*, and *the Walk of Faith*. The present treatise relates to the improvement of the former doctrines, considering the scripture motives and encouragements for the believer's rejoicing always in the Lord, and triumphing in the God of his salvation. The ground of his triumph is the work of Christ: His warrant to depend upon it, is the word of Christ: and his actual dependence is the work of the Spirit of Christ. Building upon these principles, he is commanded to go on from faith to faith, still pressing forward that he may see more clearly the glory of the person, and the glory of the work

work of Christ, what he is to trust in for his title to salvation, and for the things which accompany salvation, and may by every day's experience be growing into a more settled dependence upon the word of Christ, and upon his faithfulness to fulfil it: And thereby may be learning to expect constant supplies, and according as his faith increases receiving greater supplies of the power of the Spirit of Christ: That the God of hope may fill him with all joy and peace in believing, that he may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost; And we have an encouraging example in the Thessalonians, who had great trials, and met them with great faith. The apostle commended it highly, but by practice it had so improved, that having occasion to mention it some time afterwards, he says,—"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly." We have the same promises, and the same helps, as they had—promises exceeding great, and exceeding precious, containing a free grant in Christ of all spiritual blessings—a full warrant to make use of them for life and godliness, with commands and encouragements to trust and not be afraid of any enemies, or of any dangers: Because he is faithful who has promised to be with them—to guide them with his counsel—to keep them safe by his power—to bless them with his love—and never to leave them nor forsake

forfake them: So that in all difficulties and troubles, they may go on their way rejoicing, until faith and patience have done their perfect work. To this purpose, a Divine, whose praise is in all the churches, has given his testimony: "It is an everlasting spring of comfort, and encouragement unto the people of God, both in prayer, and unto prayer; they pray to him, who is mighty, mighty to do what they pray for. The Lord's promises are our richest inheritances, and that not only because he hath promised greater and better things, than are in the compass of any man's power to make good, or in the compass of any man's understanding to comprehend; but because he will certainly be as good in performance, as he hath been in promise: For he is in one mind concerning all that he hath promised: He will be merciful as he hath promised, and pardon sin, as he hath promised, and sanctify all our troubles, as he hath promised: he will give us his Spirit, as he hath promised, and save us eternally as he hath promised." A great Layman thus confirms the same truth--Were God but believed in what he says, all the temptations of Satan, and the doubtings of our unbelieving hearts, would be silenced and brought to nothing. What exceeding folly is it in our hearts, that God, who never deceived any that trusted in him, should be distrusted by any, and not believed by all. He is the God of truth:

so

so is his word the word of truth. And not any soul, that ever tried God by trusting him upon his word, but found him so. Oh, then take God's word, and our hearts will be quiet. Though the heathen do rage, yet they imagine but a vain thing. In this glorious doctrine, free grace in God is the fountain, full satisfaction to divine justice the way, but perfect salvation and redemption to all his elect body in Christ the end. And truly when a soul can say, My Beloved is mine, and I am his, he hath spoken all at once. I know no other light nor rule, but the word and Spirit to make out any thing of God to any soul: The glory of the great day will be—God is mine, and I am his."

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Some scripture encouragements for the triumph of faith.

ALL the old testament words which we translate triumph, signify great joy, felt in the heart, and expressed outwardly in word or deed; a jubilee of joy, even joy in the highest, as near as it can be to the joy of heaven. In the new testament the word is used but twice: First, for what Christ engaged to do for us, and secondly, for what Christ engaged to do in us. For as he undertook to fight our battles against all our enemies—sin, the world, Satan, death and hell: And the Captain of our salvation has gained a complete victory, and had a most glorious triumph over them in his own person—when he blotted out the hand writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and he took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross: And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in that same cross. And he still goes on conquering and to conquer: By the preaching of his cross and passion, his resurrection and ascension, he is to this very day exalting the honours of his victory and triumph in the hearts and
lives

lives of his redeemed, giving them such a share in his conquests, that they ought to be ever praising him with joyful lips—Now thanks be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ. This was the apostle's happy experience. He found that the gospel, and his preaching of it, and the great success which attended it, were the fruits of Christ's presence with him, and blessing upon him: Therefore to him he gave all the glory. So do we still. We see the triumphs of the cross spread far and wide, and we praise him for our day of gospel grace. The crucified Saviour in his majesty rides on prosperously in the chariots of salvation, and his enemies fall under him. In the day of his power he makes them a willing people. They submit to his sceptre, and acknowledge him to be their Lord, and their God. Under his banner they fight the good fight of faith, and they daily conquer, yea, they are more than conquerors through him who loveth them, crowned conquerors in glory everlasting. Thus it appears that the triumph of the Head includes the triumph of his members. The fountain from whence springs their present, and their eternal joy, is God—God in Christ. They glory in the victories of the God-man; Because of his commandment; because of his free promise, which is a perfect warrant for the fullest confidence: And because of his goodness, truth and power, which are bound to fulfil all his engagements.

ments. Looking to these infallible securities, the believer's heart is established, trusting in the Lord. Being of the true circumcision, he would put no confidence in the flesh, but would be daily crucifying it with its affections and lusts, and bringing all high thoughts of self to the obedience of Christ. If he has been long standing in the faith—an old christian—if he has received much consolation from his Lord—or has been very active and successful in his service; his trust is never in himself. The ground of his believing is always one and the same. He has no new doctrine to learn. No new warrant to encourage him to believe. The word of God—Thus saith the Lord, is always sufficient: And ought to draw forth the fullest credit, that can possibly be given to the testimony of the God of truth. What was advanced before in *The Life of Faith*, and in the *Walk of Faith*, is taken for granted in the present treatise. Here is no new doctrine. Salvation is in Christ Jesus, and in no other: I am, says he, *the truth*, the one saving truth, like himself, the same yesterday, to day and for ever. One Lord, one faith, one salvation. And whoever believes this aright is in a safe state, in which there is no change with respect to God; no variableness, or shadow of turning. Whatever his own apprehensions may be, the word of the Lord endureth for ever. He may be tempted in a legal hour to cast away his confidence,

confidence, but the counsel of the Lord shall stand. He may change, but I, saith God, change not. For the gracious gifts and calling of God are without repentance—they are such that it cannot repent him of bestowing them, or of continuing them, when once bestowed. As the believer has no new truth to learn, only to improve the principles of the doctrine of Christ: So he has no new title to expect. Under the free grant and gift of God, salvation comes to him of grace, in the most sovereign way that can be conceived. And his warrant to receive it is the divine command; and when he has been enabled to receive it by the obedience of faith, the divine promise assures him, that he shall not perish for his sins, but that he shall have everlasting life. Believing the promise is the best title that possibly can be to this salvation; for we are saved freely by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, neither salvation nor faith; both are the gifts of God. And under the title all the blessings which accompany salvation are included, all the things which are freely given to us of God—a sufficiency of present grace, and the full possession of eternal glory. This is the good old foundation, upon which the heirs of promise have always built their faith and hope. They knew, that all fulness was in Christ for their use and enjoyment: And they were persuaded, that they should honour him most, by believing this with the strongest confidence

certainty.

certainty. They could not trust too soon, nor too much, to his faithfulness. And therefore they come boldly to the throne of grace, that they may receive out of his fulness at all times, for all things, for body and soul, for earth and heaven, what they wanted, and what he had promised. The more they live thus by faith, they will experience more occasion to rejoice in the Lord: And to find that his arm to fulfil will always go as far as his promise, even to bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ. This indeed is strong faith, but it is the gift of a strong God: it does not depend, in the least, on what the believer can do for himself, but on what the Almighty has engaged to do for him, and in him, and by him: For he requires and commands it in this high degree: There is grace sufficient to bring it into use and practice, as far as the commands go, all things promised being possible to him that believeth: And they who have trusted most to the faithfulness of God, who against hope believed in hope, have experienced that God did never leave them nor forsake them. He magnified his word above all his name. There he has made his name to shine forth, and all his attributes are magnified in their greatest perfection. The believers on earth, and the saints in heaven, praise God for his word, because it is the instru-

ment of his Spirit, by which he bestows grace, and according to which, he gives glory. The fulfilling of his word runs through time, and will run through eternity. Blessed be God for his word of promise: Blessed be the Lord, that it will be fulfilling for ever and ever. This being the case, it becomes necessary to enquire into the divine records, and to see what a full warrant God has given us to trust and not be afraid: And this to every believer, there being the same ground to believe with the strongest faith, as to believe at all.

This enquiry is the more necessary, because of the place which faith holds in our religion. It reaches to the whole of it: So that nothing is good before God, however fair and specious it may appear to men, without it. The conscience, the heart, and its affections, are purified only by faith. All duties, for their right motive, and for their acceptance, depend upon it. Without faith it is impossible to please God. No trials and afflictions can be patiently and profitably endured, unless faith be in exercise. Our whole warfare is carried on, and can be, by our being strong in the Lord, and fighting in the power of his might, finished victoriously only by faith. Indeed it enters so much into every thing wherein we have to do with God, that the strengthening of it is the strengthening of every other grace; which are weak or vigorous according as more

them or

or less faith enters into them. And therefore the scripture encouragements for our growth in faith should be well weighed with much prayer, frequent meditation, and thanksgiving, that they may have their proper effect upon the believer's heart and life. And as this can be done only by power from on high: Assistance must ever be sought from thence, and depended upon. The Holy Spirit is the very breath of spiritual life, and of all spiritual activity. Every godly motion of the heart is from his holy inspiration. So the scripture teaches: 2 Cor. iii. 5. "Not that we (even apostles) are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." So we are taught to pray: O Lord, from whom all good things do come, grant to us thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.* Fifth Sunday after Easter, and again, the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity. O God, forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee; mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A great Divine has thus expressed the same sentiments. In those who are truly converted all saving truths are transcribed out of the scripture into their

their hearts. They are taught of God; so as they find all truths, both concerning the estate, and the gracious and happy estate of man, in themselves. They carry a body of divinity in them, and about them; so as from a saving feeling they can speak of conversion, of grace, of the Spirit, &c. and from this acquaintance are ready to yield and give up themselves to truth revealed, and to God speaking by it. And thus a man may know his estate before God by his relish for the word. There is a heavenly and divine relish in the word of God, as for instance—Take the doctrine of his providence, that all things shall work together for the best to them that love God. What a sweet word is this! A whole kingdom is not worth this promise—That whatever befalls a Christian in this world, there is an over-ruling Providence to sway all to good, to help forward his eternal good—That Christ will be present with us in all conditions—That he will give us his Holy Spirit—That when we confess our sins, and lay them open, he is merciful to forgive them—That if our sins were red as scarlet, they shall be as white as wool. What kind of incredible sweetness is in these to a heart that is prepared for these comforts? The doctrines of reconciliation, of adoption, of glory to come, of the offices of Christ, and such like, how sweet are they? They relish wonderfully to a sanctified soul. These truths that come out of the mouth
of

of Christ, and out of the ministry concerning Christ, they are most sweet of all. Oh how sweet were these words to the poor man—*Thy sins are forgiven thee*—Do you think they went not to his heart? The best discovery of a true affection to Christ, and of a true state in grace, is form our affection to the word of Christ. Wherever there is an interest in Christ, there is an high respect to the word.”

A believer trusting to these helps, and making a diligent use of these means, in reading the charter of grace, will find such a faith frequently described and required, as relies on the truth of God without doubt or wavering, as depends on his faithfulness to his promises, with the fullest confidence of the heart, and waits on his fulfilling them, stedfastly persuaded, that he has spoken nothing with his mouth but what he will infallibly make good with his arm.

All the gifts and graces of God come to us in his promises, and cannot be received or enjoyed, but in the way of believing. What then can be a greater encouragement not to stagger at any promise through unbelief, than that God has declared it is a service well pleasing and acceptable to him. It is high worship, to be strong in faith, giving glory to God: For it is a gift of his love, and a grace of his Spirit, and his own special work in the hearts of his people. In the day of his power he makes them willing, and he enables them to set to their seal, that God is

true. So we read—"By faith in Christ, Enoch walked with God, and he had this testimony, that he pleased God, but without this faith it is impossible to please him." Therefore Enoch's state, and his walk, and his translation, were all by faith. Now we know, that the judgment of God is according to truth, and he has declared in the word of truth, that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. So that it is impossible it should please a most holy God; who has magnified his word above all his name, and who delights to see his people do the same, magnifying it, by giving it the fullest credit of their hearts, and the most perfect dependence of their lives.

He has also required this by his express command: This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, who has said, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," with the same faith, and with the same worship: And when the jailor enquired of Paul and Silas, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? They answered—Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. And this belief is commanded in very trying circumstances, when the outward supports of faith seem to fail, and the inward comforts are at a very lowebb: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light: Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay

"upon his God,"--his God still. That relation is always the same: And so are the blessings which are included in it, and which he cannot fail to bestow upon them who honor his word in such trials of their faith, that against hope they believe in hope: For blessed are all they who put their trust in him.

For the farther confirmation of their faith he has strengthened his commands, with the most encouraging promises of grace to help in every time of need. Ask, and ye shall have: For he giveth to all askers liberally, and upbraideth not, come they ever so often, or ask ever so much: yea, our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him: And his influence goes as far as any promise, for he is the mighty power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Whatever is promised, he is almighty to fulfil. So we read when our Lord cursed the barren fig tree, the apostles marvelled, that it presently withered away. Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, if ye have faith and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done: And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive: For believing honors the truth of the promiser, and asking in prayer for the fulfilling of it, engages and secures the pro-

mised grace. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much ; so much, that the prayer of faith has opened and shut heaven. It has done wonders in removing mountains of difficulties, and conquering hosts of foes, which rendered it seemingly impossible that the word of God should be established. But faith gained the victory, and triumphed gloriously.

It has pleased God also to confirm all these arguments, by revealing the motive, on which he made the promises. It was love. They are all free grace promises. In his councils, in the revealing them, in the fulfilling them, love directs the whole. They are discoveries of what is in the Father's heart to his children, and are the means of conveying his fatherly blessings, especially such a persuasion of his love to them, as will work love to him, and they work by love. For we love him, because he first loved us : Therefore he speaks to them comfortably, addressing himself to them in the tenderest compassion, and calling them by the dearest names—his chosen—his beloved—his adopted—his children—his friends—heirs, heirs of God—joint heirs with Christ, who is Lord of all—his peculiar treasure—his portion—these, and many other endearing names, are intended to convince them of his love, and to win, and engage their hearts in love to him : That when it is given them to believe the truth of his promises, they might be certain of their fulfilment.

fulfilment. God is love: He delighteth in his people. His heart is so set upon them, that in his dealings with them, love has the appointing, the directing, and the blessing of all. His love to them had no beginning, and it will have no end. It bestows on the happy objects of it, grace, and it secures to them glory. Love has crowned their Head. And love will crown all his members. For out of his fulness they are most freely invited to come, and take all spiritual blessings, as the earnest of eternal. Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon them! who can believe it, and not love him again!

It has pleased God also to give us some examples of his singular favor, to them who acted strong faith, and to whom he therefore administered strong consolation. The apostle says, "That whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." And then he prays, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, by the power of the Holy Ghost." And when the Holy Ghost gives it this blessed effect, he always fills the heart with gratitude and thankfulness. Thus, it operated in the day when the believer was enabled to say, "O Lord, I will
" praise

" praise thee: Though thou wast angry with
 " me, thine anger is turned away, and thou
 " hast comforted me. Behold, God is my sal-
 " vation, I will trust and not be afraid: For the
 " Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song, he
 " also is become my salvation. Therefore with
 " joy shall ye draw water out of the fountain of
 " salvation." O what reviving cordials did the
 father of the faithful draw out of it! who against
 hope believed in hope, that he should become
 the father of many nations, according to that
 which was spoken: " So shall thy seed be: And
 " being not weak in faith, he considered not his
 " own body now dead, neither yet the deadness
 " of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the
 " promise of God through unbelief, but was
 " strong in faith, giving glory to God:" And
 being fully persuaded, that what he had pro-
 mised, he was able also to perform. For this
 heroic faith, he is celebrated in scripture, and
 proposed to us for an example. One of his chil-
 dren was enabled to follow close the steps of his
 faith, through a life of continual and great suf-
 ferings, and to triumph in the prospect of a vio-
 lent death. " I am now ready to be offered up,
 " and the time of my departure is at hand: I
 " have fought a good fight, I have finished my
 " course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth
 " there is laid up for me a crown of righteous-
 " ness,

“ nefs, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will
 “ give me in that day, and not to me only, but
 “ unto all them that love his appearing.”

We have another example given us in the fifty-sixth Psalm. On whatever occasion the prophet indited it, the Spirit of prophecy teaches us to apply it to the Son of David, who is Christ the Lord. It describes his great trials, and continual persecutions, and his invincible faith, by which he was carried through them, when all the world was against him. The whole Psalm is a prayer made up of the most perfect trust, and confidence in the faithfulness of God to his word, and he assures himself that heaven and earth shall pass away, before one jot or tittle of it could fail. He had enemies, many, mighty, cunning, cruel, united together to destroy him, Acts iv. 27, but his heart was established, trusting in the Lord. He read, he knew, he believed the promises made to him, and, without doubt or wavering, he waited for the fulfilling of them. Thus he viewed the Father's covenant engagements, who had declared; “ Thus saith God the
 “ Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretch-
 “ ed them out, he that spread forth the earth,
 “ and that which cometh out of it: He that
 “ giveth breath unto the people upon it, and
 “ spirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord
 “ have called thee in righteousness, and I will
 “ hold thy hand, and I keep thee, and I will
 “ give

" give thee for a covenant of the people," &c.
On this rock he built his faith, and could not be moved. " The Lord God, says he, hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back : I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair : I hid not my face from shame and spitting : For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded : therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed : He is near that justifieth me, who will contend with me ? Let us stand together. Who is mine adversary ? Let him come near to me. Behold the Lord God will help me, who is he that shall condemn me ? Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment, the moth shall eat them up." What an undaunted courage is here manifested ? In this spirit of faith, he prays—

" Be gracious unto me, O God, because fallen man would devour me : all the day long he is fighting against me, and oppressing me : all the day long mine enemies would devour me ; for they are many who fight against me, O thou most high. In the day, when I might have reason to fear, I will put my trust in thee ; I shall praise God because of his word : In God I have put my trust, I will not fear what flesh can do unto me : All the day long they torture my words : All their devices are
" against

“ against me for evil : They assemble together ;
“ they hide themselves : They watch my steps,
“ as if they were waiting for my life : Shall they
“ escape for their wickedness ? In thine anger,
“ O God, thou wilt bring these people under :
“ Thou numberest my wanderings ; thou hast put
“ my tears into thy bottle : Are they not recorded
“ in thy register ? In the day, when I shall pray
“ unto thee, then shall mine enemies be driven
“ back : This I have known for certain, because
“ God is on my side : I will praise God, because
“ of his word : I will praise Jehovah, because of
“ his word : In God have I trusted, I will not
“ fear what man can do unto me. Thy vows
“ are upon me, O God. I will pay my thank-
“ givings unto thee : For thou hast delivered my
“ life from death. Wilt thou not also keep my
“ feet from falling, that I may be able to walk
“ in the presence of God, in the light of life
“ everlasting ? ”

O what a perfect trust and confidence is this !
And how loudly does it call upon us to look to
his example, that God would give us grace to
follow the steps of his faith. Observe, O my
soul, and consider the pattern set before thee.
He had God on his side—the promises—the
power—the providences of the Almighty. He
knew that every step was marked, every tear
noticed, and that God had them in the book of
his remembrance. In this faith he met his trials,
and

and came off triumphant. Notwithstanding his many weary steps, and his strong crying and tears under that sorrow, which never had its like, yet he knew that he should be heard--and he was heard: His enemies fell before him: But they rose and returned to the combat. Upon the word he casts his anchor again. He trusts to it. And he finds it firm and sure still. The storm is great; it continues; it encreases; all thy waves and storms, says he to his God, are gone over me. But, my soul, trust thou still in the Lord: for my hope is in him. His word is my stay. It cannot be broken. I praise him for it; again I praise him for it. Trusting in it, now my fears are gone. God is my helper, and I will not fear what man can do unto him. O what a pattern is here set for us! May the meditation upon it be useful. May the gracious Lord, who is the author and the finisher of the faith, bless the means ~~of~~ ^{own} appointing, for the strengthening of it. And in the use of them, looking up for the constant supplies of his Spirit, may he enable us to go on from strength to strength, keeping this example always in view, until he bring us in peace unto the end of our faith.

These are some of the scripture grounds, upon which the Triumph of Faith is built. It stands upon the almighty power of God, as engaged to fulfil his word. For his word is his deed. To take him at his word is the proper exercise of faith.

faith. He hath promised and it is done. To rest thus upon it, as what cannot possibly fail, is the foundation of christian worship: And when it is established in the heart, in the love of the truth, it constitutes the chief of that service, which is perfect freedom: For God has declared himself well pleased with our trusting to his truth and faithfulness. He has commanded us to do it without doubt or wavering. He has promised grace sufficient to enable us thus to believe, and we cannot put too much trust and confidence in his arm and power. And he has also given us examples of those, who honoured him with the fullest reliance of their hearts, and had reason to rejoice in the Lord, who keepeth promise for ever. Glory be to him for such encouragements of our faith. O that they may have their proper effect. May the Holy Ghost apply them by his grace, and give us such a faith, as may be well pleasing unto God; such a faith as he has commanded, and for the full exercise of which he has made exceeding great promises. Help us, O God of all grace, to trust and not be afraid: For thou art faithful: Thy word and thy promises give us full security to trust in the Lord at all times; because in the Lord Jehoyah is everlasting strength: And blessed are all they who put their trust in him.

But by what ways and means shall these arguments and encouragements have their full effect?

This

This is the main point; and it is settled beyond dispute upon scripture authority. The same Spirit, who revealed the promises, is also the fulfiller of them: And he is almighty. The blessing on the use of the means is entirely from him: It is he who teacheth man knowledge: And from him we are to seek it in prayer. With all our reading, hearing, studying, meditating upon the scriptures, we must look up to him for his divine teaching. If any of you, believers, lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth to all askers liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him; but let him ask in faith. Here is a command and a promise. When we lack wisdom, which we always do, as much as we want breath, we are to ask it of the Spirit of wisdom, and it shall be given us. He will make us wise unto salvation. He will keep us in the use of means dependent on his leading us into all useful truth, and of his revealing to us the things which are freely given to us of God, to shew them to us, as realities, and to put us into the enjoyment of them, as blessings. In this dependence on him, we live, and move, and have our being. Our spiritual life and faculties, and the exercise of them, and the improvement of them, are entirely from his influence. For the Apostle, mentioning the several gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, says, "All these worketh that one, and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man his own gifts,"

"gifts, according to his own will." To him then we are to look up for every good gift, and every perfect gift. Whenever we open the Bible, we should ask his light and his teaching. He is the chief commentator. He only can put the scriptures into our inward parts, and write them upon our hearts, so that we may experience them to be the power of God unto our own salvation. Our first reformers were of this sentiment, exhorting us to pray, that by the holy inspiration of God's Spirit, we may think those things that be good, and by his merciful guiding, may perform the same. Grant to us, Lord, we beseech thee, the Spirit to think and do always such things as be rightful; that we who cannot do any thing that is good without thee, may by thee be enabled to live according to thy will, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.* Ninth Sunday after Trinity.

As they prayed, so they sung: For we meet with two hymns, inserted by the reformers in the Common Prayer Book, appointed to be sung at the ordaining of priests, and at the consecration of bishops. The first begins with these words—

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,

And lighten with celestial fire, &c.

Out of the second I quote some verses, not for any excellency of the poetry, but for the soundness

soundness of the divinity expressed in these lines—

Come, Holy Ghost, eternal God,

Proceeding from above,

Both from the Father and the Son,

The God of peace and love.

Visit our minds, and into us

Thy heav'nly grace inspire,

That in all truth and godliness

We may have true desire.

Thou in thy gifts art manifold,

Whereby Christ's Church doth stand,

In faithful hearts writing thy law,

The finger of God's hand.

According to thy promise made,

Thou givest speech of grace,

That thro' thy help, the praise of God

May stand in every place.

O Holy Ghost, into our souls

Send down thy heavenly light,

Kindle our hearts with fervent love,

To serve God day and night.

Strengthen and stablish our weakness,

So feeble and so frail,

That neither devil, world, nor flesh,

Against us may prevail.

Grant us, O Lord, thro' thee to know

The Father most of might,

That of his dear beloved Son,

We may attain the sight.

And

And that with perfect faith also,

We may acknowledge thee,

The Spirit of them both always,

One God, in persons three.

From these authorities, it appears to be the doctrine of the scriptures, and of our reformers in harmony with them, That spiritual life, and knowledge, and faith in Christ, and hope in him, that maketh not ashamed, and holy love, with every godly motion of the heart, come from the holy inspiration of God the Spirit. It is from him, that we understand the scriptures, in the mind of the Spirit: It is from his grace that we grow in scripture knowledge, and persevere in the use of means, and at the same time in a constant dependence on his presence in them, for the furtherance and joy of our faith. He begins, he carries on, and he perfects our learning in his revealed word and will. O that he may make us, and keep us good scholars, in an abiding sense of the necessity of his divine teaching: that the Spirit and the word may go together in our Bible studies, and Bible experience: so that this may be the daily prayer of our faith.

O thou Spirit of wisdom and revelation, who hast taught us that secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us, and to our children for ever, open the eyes of our understanding to understand what is revealed in the scriptures for our use.

Dispose

Dispose us to hear them, read them, and meditate on them, with profit. And help us to mix more faith with them, that they may become more precious : In every day's reading, grant that we may find them to be the ingrafted word, and that we are really branches grafted into the tree of life, and by the rain, and shining of heaven, enabled to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit abundantly. For all these blessings keep us ever dependent on thy divine teaching, that our fruits may grow richer and riper—we may be more humble in our hearts, and more thankful in our lives ; And so we, who can learn nothing as we ought without thee, may by thy grace be made wise unto eternal salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus—To whom with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Spirit, be equal honor and glory, now and for ever.

Amen. O that the many revealed word and will of God, which we keep as good treasures in an abiding sense of the necessity of his divine teaching : that the Spirit and the word may go together in our Bible studies and Bible experiences, so that this may be the daily prayer of our hearts.

O thou Spirit of wisdom and revelation, who hast taught us that secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us, and to our children for ever, edify our eyes of our understanding to understand what is revealed in the scriptures for our use.

CHAP.

Dispose

CHAP. III.

The believer's triumph in the Lord his righteousness.

THE object of his rejoicing is always one and the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever, without any variableness, or shadow of turning. It is Christ, God in Christ, concerning whom the commandment runs--Rejoice in the Lord Jesus always, and again, I say, rejoice; there being in him a fountain of joy springing up into everlasting life. What he is in his own wonderful person--what is revealed of his gracious works and ways in his dealings with the sinners of mankind--what he did for them in the days of his flesh--what he does in them by his Spirit in time--what he has promised to give them in eternity; in every possible view that can be taken of him, a believer may, and ought to rejoice always, and that with a fulness of joy: For thus the Apostle offers up his praise---“ Now thanks be to God, “ who always causeth us to triumph in Christ.” For he has in his person every possible subject of triumphant joy. He is true and very God: And he is true and very man--God and man in one Christ. The prophet Isaiah foretold this marvellous union, and gloried in the prospect: For

us men, and for our salvation, a child is born, and a son is given: And his name shall be called Wonderful, because the child is the mighty God, and the Son is the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. This is the great mystery of godliness, of which the Saints in the Old Testament sang with the sweetest melody, in their hearts unto the Lord, as the prophet does in the one hundred and forty-eighth Psalm, calling upon all in heaven and earth, with all their inhabitants, to join him in the praises of Immanuel: Because his Name alone is excellent, and his praise above heaven and earth. So that New Testament saint felt it, who declared, that he accounted all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and I do account them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him—found so united to him as to be one with him: For he was united to our nature, in order to bring about another most blessed union. He taking our nature, that we might take his—He made the Son of man, that we might be made the sons of God—He having the power of an endless life, that he might give spiritual and eternal life to all believers: For they in the day of his power are joined to the Lord by one Spirit—the same Spirit in the members as in the Head—that through him, their Head, they might be able to say, Truly our fellowship is with the Father

Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, by the bond of his Spirit. It is not possible for man to conceive higher things, than our Lord has prayed for in these words: "Neither pray I for these
 " alone, but for them also who shall believe on
 " me through their word: That they all may
 " be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in
 " thee, that they also may be one in us, that the
 " world may believe that thou hast sent me:
 " And the glory which thou gavest me, I have
 " given them, that they may be one, even as
 " we are one." By virtue of this union with Christ, who is the Head over all things to the church, his members have fellowship with him in his holy life: He is the Lord Jehovah their righteousness: For them he became subject to the law, and obedient to its precepts, born of a woman, and made under the law, that through his obedience many might be made righteous. Lo, I come, says he, to DO thy will, O God, and he did it by fulfilling all righteousness. As the surety for his people, what he did, when he magnified the law, and made it infinitely honourable in all its demands, was for them, and for their justification, that it might be imputed unto them for righteousness, and they might be dealt with as righteous at the judgment seat of God. In this the father of the faithful made his boast, and gloried all the day long: For we read, that he believed in God, and God imputed to him righteousness, loving him

as his friend, and blessing him in all things. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead: For the children of believing Abraham are freely made heirs, as he was, of the righteousness which is by the faith of Jesus Christ. Hear one of them with what heart-felt joy he celebrates his triumphant state in Christ: "I will hope continually, and I will praise thee more and more—my mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness, and thy salvation all the day: For I know not the numbers thereof: I will go in the strength of the Lord God, I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine ONLY." He found the blessings flowing from it numberless, and endless: So that it was all he wanted for his justification to life, and for his title to glory—it ONLY. In the same Psalm, admiring and adoring the wonders of the gift of grace, he breaks out: "Thy righteousness, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee?" He was so complete in this righteousness of Christ, that he would mix nothing with it for his free access to God, or for his full acceptance before God. He knew, that this righteousness of faith was appointed of God, was the gift of his grace, and was all-sufficient, being an everlasting righteousness: And therefore it effectually removed the consciousness of sin from his heart

heart, and enabled him to come boldly to the throne of grace, where he stood perfectly justified in Jesus. And in the same spirit we hear a New Testament saint resolving to exclude all glorying, except in Christ, and in his righteousness, "in whom God can be just, and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? By the law of works? Nay, but by the law of faith: Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law; and that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." This was the apostle's highest ambition, to be found in his precious Saviour. O that I may rejoice in him through life, and may be found in him at the hour of death, and at the day of judgement--- found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. Blessed testimony for Jesus---encouraging example to place our whole trust and confidence in the Lord our righteousness, and our strength: For he is the same to us as he was to the apostle Paul, and we have as good reason to triumph as he had, because it is written, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, "my soul shall be joyful in my God: For he "hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of
"right-

"righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh him-
 "self with ornaments, and a bride adorneth
 "herself with her jewels: For as the earth
 "bringeth forth its bud, and as the garden
 "causeth the things that are sown in it to spring
 "forth; so the Lord God will cause righteous-
 "ness and praise to spring forth before all the
 "nations." This is the righteousness of faith,
 and these are the fruits of it, which abound to
 the glory of God, even peace with him, joy in
 him, a holy walk with him, and a victorious
 warfare by him. In the Lord shall all the seed
 of Israel be justified, and shall glory. Herein to
 glory is the believer's bounden duty. He is
 called to it, as his gospel privilege, and accord-
 ing to his faith he does triumph in it, as his
 present happiness, and as a good ground for his
 hope of eternal joy. Wonderful blessings are
 promised to this faith and hope, and they are
 truly experienced at this day. Bless the Lord,
 O my soul, for his providing such a garment for
 glory and beauty. He has warranted thee to
 put it on, and having through it free access into
 his presence, he has commanded thee to join
 that great multitude, whom no one can number,
 who are standing before the throne, and before
 the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in
 their hands, and who cry with a loud voice,
 saying, "Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon
 "the throne, and to the Lamb for ever" Their
 robes

robes are as white as the light, being washed clean in the blood of the Lamb, and through him they have conquered, as the palms in their hands denote; yea, are more than conquerors, having crowns of righteousness upon their heads, which can never fade away. For grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. O what matter of triumph is here! A righteousness absolutely perfect and everlasting! This greatly enhances all our high joys in Christ, that there is full security for their continuance. It depends on the faithfulness of God to his word and promise, fixed in his eternal counsels, and established upon immutable things. "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord, "and mine is an everlasting righteousness: Lift "up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon "the earth beneath: For the heavens shall vanish "away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old "like a garment, and they that dwell therein "shall die in like manner, but my salvation shall "be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be "abolished." The state of a believer is always one and the same on God's part. He may vary in his apprehensions of his state, but with God there is no variableness, or shadow of turning. He may be a believer walking in darkness—tempted to doubt; he may pay too much attention to sense and feeling—may get into a legal spirit—

spirit—his evidences may be clouded—when outward things and providences seem to make against him, his faith may be fore tried, and he may stagger at the promises of God through some fit of unbelief—the man changeth, but God changeth not. His mercies are sure mercies. They cannot fail: For they spring from the ocean of grace, and are streams which no created power can cut off: But they shall infallibly return to it again, and shall bring with them all the happy objects of his love. The Father chose them, and gave them to his Son, who has all their names written in the Lamb's book of life: For them he lived and died: And when he presents them at the last day to the Father—"Behold I, and the children whom thou hast given me," not one of them shall be wanting: For the Holy Spirit is by his office the Lord and giver of life to them, and in the day of his power he enables them to receive Jesus, and to live by faith upon him, as members united to, and in fellowship with their glorified Head. This covenant of the blessed Trinity is unalterable, being ordered in all things and sure. All the subjects of its grace shall infallibly be saved, according to our Lord's promise, and according to our Lord's prayer, viz. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never

“ never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.” Trusting to these immutable securities the heirs of promise are commanded to draw strong consolation, even to rejoice in Jesus with a fulness of joy; in darkness as well as walking in light—in winter as well as in summer—in adversity as well as in prosperity—in death as well as in life; because he has all power in heaven and earth to make good to them every covenant engagement. And he will do it; for the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and shall come to Sion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away for ever.

O thou most blessed God and Saviour, thou art the Lord our righteousness and our strength. I believe that the whole Israel of God shall be justified ONLY by thee, and in thee ONLY shall they glory. O let thy Spirit abide with me to increase in me this faith, that by fresh supplies of his grace I may be kept from going about to establish my own righteousness, and may constantly submit myself to the righteousness of God. And by the same grace help me to bring forth the fruits of righteousness abundantly unto the glory and praise of God, magnifying thine atonement in the peace of my conscience, exalting thy righteousness in the love of my heart, and

and in my walk and warfare glorifying thy ful-
 ness: So that out of it I may be receiving a suf-
 ficiency of grace, by which I am now enabled to
 bless thee for the hope of glory. To thee, al-
 mighty Jesus, for the work of righteousness,
 which is peace, and for the effect of righteous-
 ness, which is quietness and assurance for ever:
 To thee be everlasting praise. Amen, and
 Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The believer's triumph in Jesus under a sense of the defilement of sin.

IT is in virtue of this fellowship with Jesus, that believers are freely forgiven all their iniquities. His atonement was the work of our great High Priest, who was made sin for us, although he knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. God is of purer eyes than to look upon the least iniquity: And there is a defilement in sin, which makes it exceeding filthy and abominable in his sight. He shewed his utter abhorrence of it by establishing in the Old Testament such an abundance of legal pollutions, as might exhibit to sense the defiling nature of sin, and might keep it ever before their eyes, and fresh upon their minds. And by making it necessary, that the worshippers should be purified from these pollutions, and by establishing the means of their purification, and by forbidding every other, he would lead them to exercise faith in the great purifier, whose office it was to purge their consciences, before they could offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. And it was a fixed law, That if any one legally unclean neglected or refused the appointed means
of

of being cleansed, he was to bear his iniquity : For an unpardoned sinner can have no communion with a most holy God.

Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled. The mind is the fountain from whence all the streams flow. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, &c. these are the things which defile the man. An enlightened conscience is made sensible of this, and feels the necessity of being purified from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, in order to approach God, and to have boldness and access with confidence to the throne of grace. His meditations at such times are like these.

The more I know of myself, the more I am led to loath myself, and to repent in dust and ashes: For I am a sinner, filthy and abominable altogether. By nature as vile as sin can render a fallen creature, and daily polluting myself in heart and life with fresh impurities. I have no means of cleansing myself: No hope, that any thing in the creation can do it for me. Deep in my very constitution the stain remains. And I am forced to be crying out--Unclean, unclean. My case would be quite desperate, if God himself had not provided a remedy, the report of which has come to mine ears in the gospel. O it is blessed news. I welcome it to my heart: That God
has

has opened a fountain, which cleanseeth from all sin. He has recommended it to me, as having infinite virtue and everlasting efficacy to cleanse. And I have a command from heaven, vile and filthy as I am, to make use of it: For thus it is written—"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." When the Holy Spirit enables the sinner to believe the report, and to mix faith with it, then he has a warrant thus to pray—"Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow—"Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities--Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." And the Lord hears and answers the prayer in these words--"I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you: A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh: And I will put my Spirit within you, and I will cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them: I will also save you from all your uncleannesses." The sacrifices from the beginning preached this blessed doctrine: Their blood could sanctify by divine appointment

pointment to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, to purify the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Blessed, for ever blessed be his grace, who by this offering hath opened a fountain for sin and for uncleanness, in which the most polluted may wash and be clean: For Christ so loved the church as to give himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it might be holy and without blemish: For his blood has infinite virtue to purify the foulest sinner, even so to cleanse him, that he may be perfect for ever: And the great use of faith is to receive it, and to apply it, even as God himself as recommended it, and it has lost none of its virtue. To this very day, it purifies as perfectly as ever it did, and believers now in life, and in the hour of death, feel its divine efficacy, as truly as the martyred Stephen did. I find a dying Christian thus proclaiming his faith and hope in it, when heart and flesh were failing him. "Am not I, my friends, a monument of God's rich free grace, of his boundless love and mercy in Christ? O most extensive is the efficacy of his precious blood: For it has reached to me, one of the vilest of sinners: O here is bound-

ment

less goodness, unfathomable love : This blood has washed clean my soul, the seat of defilement, that was as black as hell ; purified my conscience, that was darker than the grave, and made it brighter than the light ; in a word, this blood will make me, who was vile, most vile, a child of hell, an heir of wrath, holy before God, and fit to live with God, and the Lamb, with angels, and the spirits of good men made perfect, to all eternity, and in a few minutes my soul shall be made perfect also. O blessed, for ever blessed be God my Saviour : Eternal praises be rendered unto thee." This is true faith, and high honour put upon the blood of Jesus, to seal God's testimony concerning it. He hath set forth Jesus Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. Trusting to it, the foulest sins are washed as white as snow, and crimson sins as the purest wool. So the beloved says to his church—" Behold, thou art fair, my love : Behold thou art all fair, there is no spot in thee : Thou art all glorious within." No angel can be whiter or purer, or stand more accepted before God than he does who is washed in the blood of the Lamb. O blessed man who hast obtained redemption by it ! Thou art commanded to enter with boldness into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus--the way is open ; thou art called to draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having thy heart

heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and thy body washed with pure water, that thou mayest hold thy profession of faith without wavering, as that great multitude did, who washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; they are now crying with a loud voice, "Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever." They triumph indeed: And so mayest thou. Thou hast the same reason as they have. The same fountain, which washed their robes, cleanses thine. The same promises that it will, and thou shalt stand before God without spot of sin unto eternal salvation, as perfect as they. Jesus is thy Saviour, as truly as he is theirs: Even to-day thy conscience purged from guilt, and thy heart purified by faith, thou mayest enter within the veil, and make sweet melody in thy heart unto the Lord thy God. Our elder brethren round his throne are employed in the same delightful work: We do it here as well as we can: They in heaven, and we on earth. The same subject in the church below, as well as above, and the same employment. We try to sing the praises of the worthy slaughtered Lamb in as high a note as they do. And when we fail we try again, praying the Holy Spirit to enable us to keep in tune with them, that our songs may daily be more spiritual and heavenly. A poet of our

our own, feeling something of this harmony,
would have us to celebrate the triumphs of the
Lamb of God, in these words:

There is a fountain fill'd with blood,

Drawn from Immanuel's veins,

And sinner's plung'd beneath that flood,

Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoic'd to see

That fountain in his day ;

And there have I, as vile as he,

Wash'd all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood

Shall never lose its power,

Till all the ransom'd church of God

Be sav'd to sin no more.

E'er since by faith I saw the stream

Thy flowing wounds supply,

Redeeming love has been my theme,

And shall be till I die.

Then in a nobler sweeter song

I'll sing thy power to save,

When this poor lisping flamm'ring tongue

Lies silent in the grave.

The song of heaven is upon this same subject.
The holy Ghost has taught us the very words of
their divine hymn, and what is the harmony of
all the redeemed round the throne with one
heart and one voice, blessing God and the Lamb:

VOL. II.

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O that

Q that he may tune our hearts to join the chorus, and fit us now to sing in as high a strain as we can, and every day to aim higher, till we come to the completion of the heavenly vision thus described by the apostle.

“ After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, whom no one could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands: These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb: Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: And they sung with a loud voice, saying—“ Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever”—Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

O that

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CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The believer's triumph over sin in its guilt.

THE forgiveness of sins is the grand doctrine of salvation, on which peace with God is built. Sin is present with the believer, but pardoned. Sin is felt, but ceases to condemn. This is the chief difficulty in experience. How the truth of God, and his holiness, and his threatenings, and the honor of his law can be maintained, and yet he can be faithful and just to forgive us our sins. The believer may be often shaken in his mind, and troubled with legal fears and workings, if he be not so well established by the Spirit, and word of God, as to submit in his conscience to God's way of pardoning sin: It was always one and the same, contrived and appointed in the everlasting councils of the blessed Trinity, and revealed upon the entrance of sin, viz. that a person in Jehovah would become incarnate, and take away sin by the sacrifice of himself. To him Moses and all the prophets give witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. The proclamation of grace holds it out most clearly. When

Moses was permitted to see his glory, the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth: Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Every sacrifice preached this same truth visibly, shewing the death which the sinner deserved, and the divine method of pardoning it, through faith in the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world: For Jesus is the very paschal Lamb who was sacrificed for us: And the deliverance which they experienced in Egypt, through the sprinkling of his blood, we feel the same in our hearts unto this day: Through faith they kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them: Through the same faith we keep the same feast, and having found redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, we live safe out of the reach of the destroyer. We know our danger as they did, and we look to the Lamb of God for safety. It is the Holy Spirit who convinces both of sin and of pardon. His conviction of sin makes an impression upon the conscience of its infinite evil. He stops the sinner's mouth, and makes him subscribe to all that is said in scripture of his guilt, and of his danger. Looking at himself under the law, and

under sin, which is the transgression of the law, he is made to submit to the sentence of condemnation, and has nothing of his own to plead in arrest of judgment. Thus he is taught to think of the law, as God does, both of its precepts and penalties. He sees infinite justice, and holiness, and truth, armed against him, and the desert of his sins to be everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, which he has no power to resist, and no means to escape. When the Holy Spirit convinces him of righteousness, and manifests the grace of God, in the free forgiveness of his sins, yet still he feels the exceeding wickedness of them. He loaths and abhors himself, as the subject of them, and groans, being burthened with the abiding sense of his corruptions. At his very best it is--O wretched man, who shall deliver me, &c. but at the same time he can rejoice in God his Saviour--I thank God through Jesus Christ--He is the propitiation for my sins, and I have found peace with God through faith in his blood. Thus the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus. He gives a faith stedfast in the atonement of Jesus, and settles such a peace in the conscience, as answers all charges from sin and from unbelief. And hereby he fulfils the proclamation of grace in the New Testament, which agrees exactly with the sentiments of the Old. When our Lord sent out his apostles to preach the gospel to every creature, his commission to them runs in these

these words. "And Jesus said unto them, Thus
"it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to
"suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third
"day: And that repentance, and remission of
"sins should be preached in his name among all
"nations." They were to warn sinners of their
danger, and to call upon them to look to Jesus,
and to him only, for salvation. For he, who
commandeth all men every where to repent,
hath exalted Jesus to be a Prince and a Saviour,
to give repentance unto his people, and forgive-
ness of their sins. It is a gift of his royal
grace. One of the high honors of his exaltation
—that he can freely forgive every iniquity,
and transgression, and sin, be they ever so
many, or ever so great. For Jesus can take
away all iniquity, and receive the sinner graci-
ously.—We, says Peter, are witnesses of these
things: And so also is the Holy Ghost; whom
God hath given to them that obey him—that
come at his call in the gospel, and obey it: The
Holy Ghost turning them from self to Christ,
from sin to righteousness, from a life of sense to
a life of faith, thereby witnesses their true con-
version, which is a continual work of his grace
in that repentance which is not to be repented of,
and when he enables them to glorify God for
this mercy he gives great joy and peace in be-
lieving the forgiveness of their sins: According
to the commission which our Lord gave to St.

Paul

Paul at his conversion, "I send thee to the Gentiles, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me."

When this commission is opened to a sinner in his name, and credited by the power of his Spirit, then the conscience is purged from guilt, by that one offering, which perfecteth for ever. The believer in it has a clean heart given him. It is sanctified, and made a temple for the worship of the true God. To this the word witnesses--And the Holy Ghost is also a witness to him, that he may now enter with boldness into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus--Every possible hinderance being removed, he may have access with confidence to the throne of grace--to a Father of mercies, loving him, and blessing him with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. When he lives up to these privileges, then he feels as he ought to do. His faith relying stedfastly upon the divine promises, and giving full credit to a faithful God, he has a good conscience purged from dead works to serve the living God, and his heart consecrated for this service, he may sing of pardon and peace in as high a note of praise, and with as much spiritual joy, as ever any believer experienced. They had much in the Old Testament, when they sung the triumphs of the

Lamb

Lamb of God in the twentieth Psalm. The argument of which is thus given us in Bishop Horne's Comment. "1-4. The church prayeth for the prosperity of King Messiah, going forth to the battle as her champion and deliverer. For his acceptance by the Father, and for the accomplishment of his will;—5, 6, 7. She declareth her full assurance of faith, and her resolution to trust in him alone, and not in the arm of flesh;—8. She foreseeth the fall of her enemies, and her own exaltation; and 9. concludeth with a prayer to the God of her strength." As long as the temple stood, and the service of God was regularly carried on in it, the true worshippers had every day a solemn commemoration of that sacrifice, which was to put away their sins. They were taught to look to that precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, whom God had set forth in every sacrifice to be the great propitiation and atonement; through which alone they were to expect pardon and peace. While the lamb was burning on the altar every morning and evening, they celebrated his praises with the choicest instruments of music, and with the sweetest voices, making also melody in their hearts at the same time unto the Lord. Among other hymns given by inspiration of God for this joyful occasion, they used to sing the twentieth Psalm, in

in which they triumphed in the God of their salvation, and declareth their faith and hope in him in full concert, after this manner—

“Jehovah will hear thee in the day of trouble the name of the God of Jacob will defend thee: He will send thee help from his sanctuary, and he will strengthen thee out of Sion: He will grant thee according to thy heart, and he will fulfil all thy purposes: Then we shall shout for joy in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we shall set up our banners, when Jehovah shall fulfil all thy requests. Now I have known, that Jehovah will help the Messiah, his Christ, and will answer him from his sanctuary with the mighty power of the right hand of Jesus. Some put their trust in chariots, and others in horses, but we will cause the name of Jehovah our Alehim, (the Trinity in covenant) to be remembered: They are brought down and fallen, but we are risen, and made still to stand safe: For the King (Jesus) will put forth his power to save us: He will answer us in the day when we pray unto him.”

These are the words of the hymn: In which they express their faith in the future triumphs of the Lamb of God, and their hope in that one offering of his which was to perfect them for ever. The divine appointment, the divine acceptance, the divine application of his sacrifice, is the most noble subject, that could be sung
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upon earth: Indeed it is the subject of heaven; and will be the harmony and concert of eternity. May the Holy Ghost put our hearts in tune to join in it, and to adore and to bless the Lamb that was slain, setting up our banners as they did, Rom. viii. 31, 32, 33, 34. conquerors over sin and Satan, and all their enemies. We have the same Jesus to rejoice in, and as good reason as ever believers had, to rejoice in him with a fullness of joy. When the heart feels as happy as it can be here in God the Saviour, these are some of the delightful exercises of faith in his blood—

O, what am I, that such a sinner as I am should be thus highly favoured! A child of wrath by nature, even as others, and by practice—having sinned long with greediness—against light and conviction—sinning and sorrowing—sorrowing and sinning from year to year—a slave to the lust of the flesh, to the lust of the eyes, and to the pride of life, every moment fit and ripe for hell. O what a monument of infinite patience and long-suffering—spared from day to day, and at last called to the saving knowledge of Jesus. O what exceeding riches of grace are these—that the Father would choose me in the Beloved, and give him to save me from sin and misery: That he would send his Spirit to quicken me, and to enable me to believe, that there was mercy in Jesus for me, even for me, and plenteous redemption. What sinner can be more indebted

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debted than I am, for such miracles of grace. Glory be to God, in the highest. My Lord Jesus, the great God and my Saviour, gave himself for me, that he might redeem me from all iniquity, and might cleanse me from all sin: Trusting to his atonement, and to his righteousness, I am led to admire the Father's full absolution; "Thy sins and thine iniquities I will remember no more." Thanks be to him for this unspeakable gift. He has pronounced them blessed, and he has caused me to feel some of their blessedness, whose iniquities he has forgiven, and whose sin he has covered; And therefore I look forward with thankfulness to the great day of redemption, when Jesus will present me to himself, holy and without blemish as if I had never sinned. In this hope of salvation I triumph before God. Now I see the felicity of thy chosen—I rejoice in the gladness of thy people—and I glory with thine inheritance. Unto him, who chose me in his Son—Unto him, who loved me and washed me from my sins in his own blood—Unto him, who gave me this faith and keeps me in it; For this fellowship with the eternal Three, be eternal praise. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The believer's victory over the dominion of sin.

WE have heard from scripture some of the victories of faith over sin in its pollution and in its guilt: But there is still a hard warfare to be maintained against its dominion: For it reigneth absolutely in the children of disobedience, and it never ceaseth to strive for mastery in the children of God; who have an evil nature still—an old man, who is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and who is to be put off every day—denied in his desires—mortified in his affections, and crucified in his appetites. Thus the commandment runs, “Mortify therefore your members which are upon earth.” And the new man, who is called to this warfare, is ordered to make use of Christ’s fulness for promised courage, and strength, and victory: For without Christ he can do nothing. Sin is himself.—He is a body of sin: And he has not only to fight against himself, but also against principalities and powers, hosts of foes, united under the banner of the God of this world, trying all their cunning, and all their force to bring the believer back into the bondage of corruption; and what he has of his own is on their side.

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His worst foe is his indwelling sin, which has a complete body with all its members and lusts, always enticing to something unlawful, and tempting to the commission of it. Every faculty is ready to become an instrument of unrighteousness unto sin. It is an absolute tyrant, who rules his slaves with the most cruel rigour, keeping them captive to his will, although nothing but destruction and misery be in their ways.

Thus original sin is described in the ninth article of our church—it is the fault and corruption of every man born of Adam: And notwithstanding it still remaineth in the regenerate, yet there is a promise of daily and of complete victory over the tyrant. Thus it is written, “Sin shall not have dominion over you, because ye are not under the law, but under grace.” Once sin had full dominion, but it is taken away by the Spirit of Christ; not entirely destroyed, as to its being, but as to its ruling power—Dethroned in the judgment, there seen as it is exceeding sinful, exceeding dangerous—Dethroned in the conscience, the believer no longer under the law, but under grace, is freed from condemnation—Dethroned in the will: Not my will, Lord, but thine be done—Dethroned in the heart, I hate all evil thoughts, but thy law do I love; O what love have I unto thy law—Dethroned in the life, crucified with its affections and lusts, by the power of the cross of Jesus. It is not quite dead,

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but it is put to a lingering death, kept upon the cross, dying daily. And thus the sin, which is pardoned through the blood of Christ, is conquered by the arm of Christ, as it is written, "He will subdue our iniquities," and faith in his promised help keeps them under, subdues them effectually, so that they do not reign in the mortal body to obey them in the lusts thereof. Take an instance of this triumphant faith. Whatever the natural man can set his heart upon, or seek his happiness in—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life—Moses was enabled by the Spirit of Christ to overcome: "By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: For he had respect unto the recompence of the reward." What but almighty grace could have given him such a complete victory? He gained entire dominion over sin, even when it came to tempt him with all the pleasures, and riches, and honors of the world. He was made strong in faith: Christ ruling in his heart brought every high thought into subjection to himself: So that Moses not only resigned all his temporal advantages for Christ's sake, but what natural men account a great paradox, he chose re-
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proach, poverty, misery, rather than give up his interest in Christ. This is the victory which still overcometh the world, even our faith: For the New Testament furnishes us with such another instance of Christian heroism in the apostle of the Gentiles. He is giving an account of his own experience, and by what means he was now no longer under the law, but under grace—a sinner saved from the sentence of the broken law, and from all hope of being made righteous by his own personal keeping of it: I, through the law, says he, am dead to the law, that I might live unto God, &c. Once he was alive without the law, when he thought proudly of his own good life, that concerning the law he was blameless, but when the commandment came in the power of the Spirit, then it slew him, and killed all his former legal hopes. What he had trusted in before for life, he now found to be unto death. And Christ, faith in Christ, was the only means by which he saw he could live unto God, by his grace and to his glory. By this faith he then experienced the power of the crucified and risen Jesus: I am in Christ, says he, crucified with him, truly and spiritually dead to sin, to self, to the world, by the virtue of his cross: Nevertheless by the same faith in the same Jesus, I live, the Spirit of life in him has quickened my spirit: He has given me a new birth into the spiritual world, and has brought me to live upon the
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fulness of Jesus, as really now by faith, as I hope to live upon him by sense in heaven; "Yet not I," I neither had it of myself, nor do I continue it by any act of my own, "but Christ liveth in me:" And although I seem to live outwardly like other men, yet the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, depending upon him every moment for fresh supplies of his Spirit, to keep me in union and communion with the Father and the Son, and thereby he gives me to feel in my heart some of the blessings of that love of God in Christ, which surpasseth knowledge. It is this that purifies my soul, and sanctifies my life: Blessed, for ever blessed be his name, who thus loved me, and gave himself for me.

Such were the heroes of christianity. They fought the Lord's battles, and in the power of his might they subdued sin: They obtained dominion over it through faith in Jesus. And the same faith in the same Jesus is still mighty through him to obtain as great victories. The truth of his promise, the faithfulness of the promiser, the strength of his arm to fulfill his promise; these did not fail Moses, nor Paul—never did—never can fail any believer. Thus speaketh the Lord unto them—Sin shall not have dominion over you—having pardoned it by my blood. I will subdue it by my Spirit: Trust me, you shall find strong faith an overmatch for strong sin:

sin: Because it fights in the strength of Jesus, to whom all things are possible, and who must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. And sin and death shall be no more. Say, it is a besetting sin, this only gives more employment for faith, and for the power of Jesus. It may be a sin of constitution, breaking out into wrath and passion, that the man has no government of himself: But the Spirit of Christ can make him a new creature, and can enable him to put off the old man with his deeds, and to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. It may be a long habit of sin: But is any thing too hard for the Lord? Has he not promised—"A new heart will I give you, and I will put my Spirit within you, and I will cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my commandments and practise them." Wherever grace reigns, this scripture is fulfilled. The armies of the Lord of hosts fight under his banner, and no weapon formed against them can prosper--Kept by his mighty power they are daily more than conquerors, marching on triumphant over all opposition: For he enables them to hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of hope firm unto the end. Thus they were commanded to pray--"Order my steps, O Lord, according to thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me." They looked to his word, and to his

arm, for the right ordering of their steps, believing that he would keep the steps of his saints, and sin should not have dominion over them, now they were no longer under the law, but under the kingdom of his grace. The victory which he had promised, they expected, and he did put forth his power, according to that good word wherein he had caused them to place their trust. They found his grace sufficient to subdue the tyranny of iniquity; yea, where sin had abounded grace did much more abound in daily victory over its wiles, and its assaults. And the power of Christ resting upon them, they were kept in this spirit of prayer.

O thou God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen me mightily by thy Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in my heart by faith, and I may have his strength, to set against the power of my sins, and mine enemies. For orders, for courage, for perseverance, for victory, for eternal triumph, I look unto thee for all. Blessed be thy name, that thou hast chosen me to be a soldier, and to fight under the banner of Jesus. I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously. He made all mine enemies his own, and they are now under his feet; and I believe according to thy good word, that thou wilt put them under mine. Thou hast conquered them for me, and hast engaged to conquer them in me, and by me. It is of thy mere grace,
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almighty Jesus, that I am enabled to deny myself, to take up my cross, and to follow thee in this holy war. All my sufficiency is from the fresh supplies of thy Spirit. O grant me then abundantly to the increase of my faith, and to the praise of thy promised help. Cause me to depend every moment upon it, let me experience, that when I am weakest in myself, I may be made strongest in the Lord. And when I have nothing left me to glory in of mine own, then my soul may magnify the Lord, and my Spirit may rejoice in God my Saviour. Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid, because the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song: He also is become my salvation. To his grace and power be all the glory for ever and ever. *Amen, and Amen.*

CHAP. VII.

The believer's triumph over his troubles.

AFTER sin is pardoned, and the pardoned sinner is enabled to fight the good fight of faith against it, yet there is another enemy assaulting him to the last moment of his life. Fallen man is born to trouble. The man in Christ is so far from being exempt, that many are the troubles of the righteous. He is in common with others, liable to pain and poverty, and to afflictions of every kind: He is by his very profession exposed to some of the most trying nature--his owning Christ--his following Christ--his conformity to Christ---give offence, provoke the malice of wicked men, and the rage of wicked spirits. Wave does not follow wave more certainly, than every day brings its fresh troubles, and forces the believer to seek for aids, and comforts out of himself. This is a fore fight of afflictions. To bear up under them with any patience, and to reap profit from them, is a task above the power of mere man. Every little pain stirs up murmuring and impatience, and this rebellion against God's will is the parent of a thousand fretful tempers: And these, exercised by sharp suffering, render the man truly miserable. If his suffering continues long, increases

creases much, it often drives the poor sinner to despair; and if he has no Saviour to flee unto, he is sometimes guilty of self-murder, and dies in an act of sin, rushing head-long into everlasting destruction--The wisdom of man, of Cato himself, furnishing no better remedy against the numerous evils of human life.

To man thus exposed to suffering, and helpless under it, his suffering remaining as long as sin remains, how necessary must be the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ? He has vouchsafed to give us his promises of help, suited to every possible case of distress. When it is his will, that any of his people should be tried, he engages to make the trial of their faith much more precious than that of gold, which perisheth. He is with them, present with his divine supports and holy comforts. "Call upon me, says he, in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me: Many are the troubles of the righteous, but out of them all the Lord delivereth them." They acknowledge it with gratitude, "God was our refuge and strength, we have found him a very present help in trouble," helping us to bear up under the heaviest pressures, keeping his everlasting arms underneath us, as long as we suffer, and if the sufferings increase, increasing our faith and patience, until they have done their perfect work.

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When through the aids of his Spirit these promises have their full credit, through his inward peace, which he alone can give, and which the world cannot take away : When he makes the heart to feel happy in God, enjoying the peculiar supports of the gospel, and living up to its privileges, then the believer finds the apostle's experience to be true—" always sorrowful, yet always rejoicing," and sometimes with a fulness of joy, according to what is written, " But now, thus saith the Lord, that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, *Fear not*, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine : When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee ; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee : For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel thy Saviour : *Fear not*, for I am with thee," to support, to deliver. This is spoken to the redeemed, who are God's property, and whom he bought with a great price. What could the Lord God engage to do for them more, than is here promised, in order to still all their guilty fears, and to quiet all their natural fears ? Trusting to the redemption that is in the blood of the Lamb, they are under his keeping, they go out in his strength to meet their trials and
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their enemies. Jesus is with them, on their side ; and therefore believing in him, they need not fear any suffering. Jehovah is their Alehim, their covenant God in Trinity, their sworn allies, engaged by his almighty arm to save them from all evil, and to give them all possible good. “ I the Lord, says he, do keep thee---I will water thee with the dew of heaven every moment---lest any hurt thee, I will keep thee night and day.” Having such great and exceeding precious promises, with what holy courage should the believer look up to a faithful God, and what strong consolation should they afford him, when he is to go through the fire or through the water. He may sing with Jonah, “ I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving---salvation is of the Lord.” Or with the triumphant faith of the three children who were not afraid to go into the furnace, heated seven times hotter than usual, fully persuaded, that whether they lived or died Jesus would be with them. Threatened with the burning fiery furnace, if they refused to worship Nebuchadnezzar’s image, “ They said, O king, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter ; if it be so, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king.” And he did, he went with them into the fire, and they walked in the midst of the flames unhurt. The same Jesus is daily repeating the

the same miracle. He has approved himself in all ages to be the friend of his afflicted people : Whatever he sends to them, he sends it with his blessing. So they testify—" We know that ALL things work together for good to them that love God." They knew it by his promise, and they felt it by experience : It is good for us that we have been in trouble : We have gone through many seas and storms of affliction, and through the raging fire of persecution, not only unhurt, but benefited : For Christ was with us. As the sufferings of Christ abounded ; so our consolation abounded by Christ : He feels for them, as his members, and has bowels of the tenderest compassion. In all their affliction he is afflicted. He brings in his supports, and comes with his deliverance in the best time. He leaves no accusation of sin in the conscience, but gives and maintains a sweet peace with God. O what matter of triumph is it, when this peace rules in the heart, always, and by all means testifying—" Since God is for us, who can be against us ? He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect ? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Thanks without
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ceasing be to Jesus, the Lamb that was slain for this complete and eternal victory over sin: The apostle carries on his praises, *Rom. viii.* that through Jesus all outward opposition shall fall before us—"Who shall separate us from Christ's love to us? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter: Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that hath loved us." His love is in them all--appoints them, sends them, proportions them, and they conquer them all in his strength, not only conquer, but are more than conquerors: They are great gainers; they gain what is better than all the world, fresh proof of his love, they gain experience of it: For they find that nothing can hurt them, now he has taken them under his protection. For this his divine support we are taught to pray daily, asking it as a matter of mere favour, and expecting it only through the grace and intercession of our great High Priest--

We humbly beseech thee, O Father, mercifully to look upon our infirmities, and for the glory of thy name turn from us all those evils which we most righteously have deserved, and grant that in all our troubles we may put our whole trust and confidence in thy mercy, and evermore serve thee in holiness, and pureness of living,

living, to thy honour and glory, through our only mediator and advocate Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

When this is the prayer of faith, outward trials become inward mercies: For the Holy Spirit keeps the heart settled with its whole trust and confidence upon his promised help: So that if the trials increase, he makes them redound to the glory of God. If the outward man be a greater sufferer, even ready to perish, he renews the inward man day by day: He brings in abundant grace to sanctify abundant sufferings: Whereby he satisfies the hearts of the sufferers, that these light afflictions which are but for a moment, will work for them a far more excellent and eternal weight of glory. The hope of this keeps them patient and thankful. By the power of the Holy Ghost, they know this eternal triumph will be soon. Yet a very, very little while, they will be favoured with the sight of the king in his beauty: They shall sit down with him in his throne, and shall reign with him for ever and ever.

For the farther confirmation of our faith, he has set before us a cloud of witnesses, who testify, with one voice, that he sanctified all their troubles, and turned them into covenant blessings. So one of them said—“I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth: My soul shall make her boast in the Lord,

Lord, the humble shall hear thereof and be glad : O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together: I sought the Lord, and he heard, and delivered me from all my fears. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles." Their very troubles become matter of triumph. He shut them up in the ark, and they were saved, when he drowned the world of the ungodly. Peter speaking from experience says, The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of their troubles, as he did righteous Lot, when he overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. The more the Egyptians oppressed his people, the more they multiplied and grew. Behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. The fire of persecution raged against the church, but the blood of the martyrs was fruitful, and increased it both in number and in grace. The seed of the wicked one have been at enmity with the children of the promise from the beginning, but these trusted in the Captain of their salvation, and he led them on conquering and to conquer: "Through faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, women received their dead raised to life again, and others were

tortured not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection"—these and the other worthies mentioned, *Hebrews*, chap. xi. did wonders through Christ, who strengthened them: They loved not their lives unto death, fully persuaded, that when he should call them to it, he would be with them, and would enable them to finish their course with joy. And he did: For they all obtained a good report through faith, leaving us an example to follow the steps of their faith, and encouraging us to do it with holy boldness, whatever troubles we meet with in our way. We may, we ought to rejoice in tribulation: For we have the same Jesus to look unto, the author and the finisher of their faith and ours, the same promises of his support, the same almighty arm to make them good, and the same matter of triumph, which they experienced, whom he led on from strength to strength, until every one of them in Sion appeared before God. This is the certain heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness and salvation is of me, saith the Lord.

Of the same sentiments were our reformers, which they give us in these remarkable words in one of their prayers: O God, who art the author of peace, and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom: Defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies, that

we surely trusting in thy defence may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

And to the same purpose in one of their homilies they thus express themselves: "All correction which God sendeth us in this present time, seemeth to have no joy and comfort, but sorrow and pain, yet it bringeth with it a taste of God's mercy, and goodness, towards them that be so corrected, and a sure hope of God's everlasting consolation in heaven. If then these sorrows, diseases, and sicknesses, and also death itself, be nothing else but our heavenly Father's rod, whereby he certifieth us of his love, and gracious favour, whereby he trieth and purifieth us, whereby he giveth unto us holiness, and certifieth us that we be his children, and he our merciful Father: Shall we not then with all humility, as obedient and loving children, joyfully kiss our heavenly Father's rod, and ever say in our heart, with our Saviour Jesus Christ, Father, if this anguish and sorrow which I feel, and death which I see approach, may not pass, but that thy will is that I must suffer them, *thy will be done.*"

O thou hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble, I acknowledge my reluctance to take up thy cross, and my weakness in bearing it, hold thou me up by fresh supplies of thy Spirit, that I may be safe. Let thy strength be perfected in my weakness. Thy promises of help are exceeding

exceeding great ; through thee I do believe the truth of them, and I pray for grace to make a right use of them. Enable me in patience to possess my soul, that when it is thy will to try my faith, I may live up to my privileges, and may find it better to suffer with Christ than to reign with the world. O Lord, thou hast shewed this favour to Moses, and thou hast done more than this—Thou hast made thy witnesses glorify thee in the fires—they have marched on, fighting thy battles against hosts of foes, and they did not account their lives dear to themselves, so they might finish their course with joy, and die in faith, blessing and praising thy holy name. O thou faithful God, thou art the same to us now, as thou wast to them. Lead me on then in thy strength, trusting in thy word, and leaning on thine arm. Thou hast promised thy flock, and I hope I am one of them—"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." O thou good Shepherd, let me trust in thy love, and feel thy supports, that whatever lies before me to be done or suffered, I may be enabled to do it, and to suffer it by the continual supplies of thy Spirit. And by his influence help me to persevere, till I win the prize of my high calling, and be admitted to join that great company, whom no one can number, who
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stand before the throne of God and the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands: These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb: Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them: They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun smite them, nor any heat: For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. O my Jesus, I bless thee for this most glorious prospect: It is of thy mere grace that I am in any measure enabled to join that great company: It is entirely of thy special favour that I have any good hope to come to their glory: For this, and for all thy mercies, to thee with the Father, and the eternal Spirit, the three in one Jehovah, I give honour, and glory, and thanks, to-day, and I hope to do it without ceasing for ever and ever. *Amen, and Amen.*

CHAP. VIII.

The believer's triumph over the infirmities of old age.

IT is appointed unto all men once to die. The time is fixed by an immutable decree. The days of our years are threescore years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow : For it is soon cut off, and we fly away. If some be permitted to live longer, yet the infirmities of old age must arrive, bringing with them labour and sorrow, the forerunners of death. Circulation will become languid. The senses of the body will grow dull and heavy. The faculties of the mind will be impaired, and will discover it by not remembering proper names. In this decline of life believers are subject to the same infirmities with other men : They have no exemption from pain, or sickness, or death : But they have that which keeps up their spirits, and makes them patient and joyful. The consolations of God are then most needed, and he has promised them, and he is faithful : He never failed them, who trusted in him. He has suited his promises to all the infirmities of age. He knows our frame perfectly, and has described it with an unerring pen, *Ecclesiastes*, chap. xii. that when we

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feel the signs of old age, we may apply to him for grace to profit by them. The symptoms there given are infallibly true and just, and are as so many monitors, warning the man, that the vigour of life is declining, and that the body is returning to the earth from whence it came. Happy is he who takes this warning, and remembers his Creator in the days of his youth, before the wearisome days come, of weakness and pain. He has fled to Jesus for refuge--and finds and experiences what he has engaged to do for his people, when heart and flesh begin to fail them. Blessed be his grace for the abundant provision which he has made for their faith and patience: He says to them, "I will be with you, I will never leave you, nor forsake you: So that you may boldly say, The Lord is our helper, and we need not fear what the infirmities of age can do unto us." One of them, the Christian Hero, thus encouraged himself in the Lord his God--
"Thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust even from my youth: By thee have I been holden up from the womb: Thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: My praise shall be continually of thee--I am a wonder unto many, but thou art my strong refuge." This was his trust: And God did not forsake him. He remembered his word unto his servant, wherein he had caused him to depend. There failed not aught of any good thing, which the Lord had

spoken unto him. O what great encouragement have believers to follow the steps of his faith! For his God is their God, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, to young and old, who put their trust in him. His promise to the Israel of God cannot be broken. Thus he pledges his word of truth to them, giving them a warrant to pray unto him, "My mouth shall be filled with thy praise, and with thy honour all the day long: For thou wilt not cast me off in the time of old age, thou wilt not forsake me, when my strength faileth." To this prayer the Lord inclined his ear, and vouchsafed this gracious answer: "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb, and even to your old age I am he, and even to hoary hairs will I carry you, I have made and I will bear you, even I will carry, and I will deliver you." These are some of his rich cordials for the aged: He provided them in his love, and he is sensibly touched with the feeling of their infirmities in administering them: For he himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses. His compassions bind him to comfort and relieve his old disciples: And when they apply to him in time of need, he is ever present to grant them his promised help: Yea, so suited to their case, as to make them grow in grace, as they grow in years. They

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bring forth fruit in their old age, the rich fruit of humility, and the ripe fruit of thankfulness; fruit that endureth unto everlasting life. We have an happy instance of this in God's goodness to an antient believer, who lived to be an hundred and seventy-five years old. He was the friend of God, who had blessed Abraham through life, and that in all things, and who even to hoary hairs loaded him with blessings. For God had promised him, "Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace, thou shalt be buried in a good old age;" and the sacred historian relating the fulfilling of the promise, says, "He gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his people." His old age was good, in body and soul. Whatever infirmities he had, they were intended for good, and actually did him good. He was a very cheerful pleasant old man. The peace of his mind had a sweet influence on his temper and behaviour. It kept him from being fretful and peevish in his family. He was loving to his children, and kind to his servants: God himself being witness. He was also happy in his last years: For he spent them in faith, and when they came to an end, he died in peace; with his last breath he committed his spirit into the hands of him who had redeemed it, *full of years*: It is in the original one word—he was satisfied: So it is rendered, Psalm xvii. 15, "As for me I

shall behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake up after thy likeness." He was satisfied with what he had enjoyed of the favour and friendship of his God; who had been his shield to defend him from all sins and enemies, and also had promised to be his exceeding great reward: This he obtained, when he was gathered to his people, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, and to the most blissful communion of the Three in Jehovah. All the children of faithful Abraham, treading in the steps of his faith, have the same God to deal with, who keepeth promise for ever. It is recorded of Isaac, the heir of the same promise with his father, that he died in the same faith, an old man. He was tried with many infirmities, but we read of no complaints, though he was an hundred and eighty years of age. He expired in praise and thankfulness, satisfied with life, and happy in the prospect beyond death. And his son Jacob, an hundred and forty-seven years old when he was dying, declared that he had waited for the salvation of God; waiting faith is strong faith: And after he had blessed his children, and had given commandment concerning his bones, he quietly, as if he had been going to sleep, gathered up his feet into the bed, and died in peace, an old man, and satisfied. All these lived in the world, strangers and pilgrims, looking for a city that hath

hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God: And they were not disappointed of their hope, they all died in faith—in an act of faith, and were gathered to their people, to the general assembly and church of the first-born. When they came to the end of their faith, they came to heaven. The moment they expired, they entered the city, which God had prepared for them: And their bodies, sleeping in the dust, are in the covenant of life, and shall be raised and glorified in the morning of the resurrection: For our Lord proves that the dead shall rise from this very circumstance: He says to the Jews—“ Have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living.” In this faith the patriarchs died: being children of the resurrection, they left their bodies in the hand and care of a covenant God, well assured that he would raise them up to glory, and life everlasting, according to that good word, wherein he had caused them to put their trust.

These examples of the loving-kindness of God to his aged servants were recorded for our learning: That believers, if God by his providence should bring them to old age, might be encouraged to trust in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with such a confidence of
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their hearts, as not to doubt of the divine truth, or of the divine power. Whatever he was to them, he is the same to us—Our God as well as theirs—Our covenant God engaged to glorify both body and soul: On whom we are commanded to cast all our cares and concerns in extreme old age. If what is of nature be failing, what is of grace cannot. If the life of sense be dying, the life of faith should flourish the more: It is a life that cannot die: For the branches thrive and bring forth fruit in their old age, not of themselves, but because they are engrafted into the heavenly vine, in which they live for ever. “I am the vine, says Jesus, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: For without me ye can do nothing.” But through my Spirit strengthening you, he will make you bud and flourish, and fill the face of the world with fruit. He will so fill you with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Christ Jesus, to the glory and praise of God, that your last days shall be your best days.

In this view of old age, it may become a favourable time for exercising and improving faith: Because the activity of the life of sense is abating, and thereby many things are removed, which before obstructed the growth of the spiritual life. Now is the time to learn to walk by faith, and not by sense. A believer, young in
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years, and young in experience, is often tempted to judge of himself by his feelings, more than by the word of God. In a good frame he is a good believer. Then all is well with him. But when he is walking in darkness, he is very apt to question his state—If all be right with me, why am I thus?—My present frame is very dull and uncomfortable—I am not so lively as I used to be in prayer or in ordinances—my delight in God, and the things of God, is far short of what it was formerly—perhaps I have been deceiving myself, and crying, Peace, Peace, when there was no peace for me.

From this temptation age itself is a sort of deliverance: Self-activity is weakened, and thereby through grace self-dependence. The believer, if he be a good scholar, will now learn to walk more by faith, and less by sight. The vigour of his senses is decaying. The high spirits of youth are abating. His present lesson is very plain and simple, and while he attends to what is passing in him, and about him, he has a thousand monitors, calling upon him now to learn and practise a perfect dependence on those things which are always one and the same, without any variableness, or the least shadow of turning. One record of God. One Saviour. One Spirit. One faith, of which the Saviour is the author and the finisher. This faith is made to grow and flourish, as there is less dependence
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on other things: And as age itself tends to weaken this dependence, it becomes in the hand of the Holy Spirit, a favourable time to live less upon the things which are seen, and more upon the things which are not seen. Less of sense, more of faith. One scale rises as the other falls. The outward man dying, the inward man grows more lively—yea, grows up into Christ Jesus, and that in all things. O blessed old man—thou hast lived to a good time, when this is thy experience: When in the prayer of faith thou canst cast all thy burdens on thy Saviour: “Lord, keep me, a poor helpless creature—Now I feel that of myself, I can do nothing, as I ought, or as I wish to do—Glorify thy grace in me, and strengthen me mightily by thy Spirit in the inner man, that I may bless thee for thy salvation, and for the things which accompany salvation—Into thy faithful hands for life and death, I commit myself, and all my concerns; for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth.”

But it must be remembered, that old age does not produce these happy effects of itself. It is not of nature, but entirely of grace, that any one is able to gain such spiritual profit from bodily infirmities. The mere natural man, fortify him with all his boasted aids of reason, and philosophy, yet he cannot help murmuring, when age brings weakness, and sickness brings pains.

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He becomes peevish and fretful. Having no friendship with God, he cannot look up for divine supports, when all human begin to fail him. Under a severe fit of the stone, or a long fit of the gout, he is often out of all patience. Uneasy in himself, he is out of humour with every body and every thing. How different is the believer in the same circumstances! His body feels pain as others do: But his mind is comfortable, and at ease. Happy in God, he has patience given him to bear his sufferings, and grace to profit from them; yea, the peace of God rules in his heart always, and by all means.

An old man with this peace which surpasseth all understanding, ruling in his heart, will he so far from complaining, that he has every thing to be thankful for, which can render him blessed of the Lord. He is provided with an infallible antidote against all that old age can try him with---It is true, I have an infirm body, but thank God, I have a sound mind: Age has brought upon me great weakness, but this makes more room for the power of God, that it may be perfected in my weakness. I have many pains, but not so many as he has comforts to give me; in the worst of them he keeps me patient, Father thy will be done---I have an afflicted body, but I have an happy heart: although the outward man be perishing, yet I faint not, because the inward

inward man is renewed day by day—My supports are great, the consolations of God not a few—I feel the symptoms of old age warning me daily of my approaching dissolution, through grace I take the warning—they find me living, and I hope they will find me dying, in the faith of the Son of God. The earthly tabernacle is taking down, but he does it with much tenderness and love, and assures me, that he has prepared for me a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. May he who keeps it for me, and me for it, never leave me nor forsake me, till I be with him, where he is, and be like him, and enjoy him for ever and ever? Yet a very, very little while—hold on faith and patience, and I shall see Jesus in his glory, which is the heaven of heavens.

O thou merciful and faithful high priest, Jesus Christ, I bless thee for thy kind promises to the aged. Thou hast suited them in great mercy to all their infirmities, and thou art always with them to help in time of need. I begin to feel the sad effects of sin in my body, weakening it, and tending to bring it down to its appointed end. To thee I look, almighty Jesus, for thy promised grace. O grant me constant supplies of thy Spirit, that I may profit by my infirmities, may exercise and improve my faith in thee, that they may keep me humble, and I may pray more in faith, and keep me thankful, that I may
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be more in praise. Thine arm is not shortened, nor can thy compassions fail. Stand by me then, and hold me up according to thy word. Make me strong in thy strength, that I may daily put more honour upon thy love and thy power. In the decline of life, let me not doubt of thy faithfulness to support, and when thou seest it best to comfort me. Vouchsafe me the consolations of God, when my heart and my flesh fail me, then be thou the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. When I am weakest in myself, then make me strongest in the Lord; and if it be thy holy will, that I should become quite helpless, an infant again, make me to lie quiet in thy hand, without murmuring or repining, but believing that thou art all my salvation, and enjoying in thee all my desire. Grant me this, Lord Jesus; for thy mercies sake, let me die in faith. Amen and Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

The believer's triumph over death.

MAN consists of two parts, a body and a soul. The bodily life is dependent on the light and air of this world, and on the circulation, which they maintain and carry on. When this connexion is broken, the body expires, it loses all sense and motion, and is dead. So the life of the soul is dependent on the light and air of the spiritual world. Jehovah in Trinity is the creator, the only fountain of being, and there can be nothing independent of him: Christ is the light, and the Holy Spirit is the breath or air of all spiritual life, and when this connexion is broken, although the soul may exist, yet its happiness in God is broken, and at an end. Sin, that great murderer sin, brought death upon body and soul: "For as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:" And we read, The soul that sinneth it shall die, sin separating it from its union, and thereby cutting it off from its communion with the Father of spirits. In the moment that Adam sinned the spiritual death took place: For he had lost the spirit of life, and was dead in trespasses and sins:

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And that same moment his body became mortal, although he lived nine hundred years after. Thus we have sin, and death, and misery, entailed upon all his descendants, from the first Adam, who is of the earth, earthy. O how precious to a sinner in these circumstances should be the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, who stands at the head of thy spiritual world, that he may give his righteousness, and his life, and his happiness, to all that believe in him! He comes Jehovah of hosts in our nature, as our champion to fight our battles, and to conquer all our foes. Immanuel was made sin for us, and he died for our sins according to the scriptures, when the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all, and was buried and rose again the third day according to the scriptures. We read therein of his noble challenge to death and the grave: "I will ransom my people from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death--O death, I will be thy plagues--O grave, I will be thy destruction, repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." It was the Captain of our salvation, the Lord of hosts is his name, who purposed this in the everlasting councils, and in due time fulfilled it by his almighty power. "Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil,

devil, and might deliver them, who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage." O what infinite condescension is this, what love, surpassing all knowledge! The most high God is manifest in the flesh, that as God in our nature, he might be our surety to act and suffer for us men, and for our salvation. Accordingly he takes our sins upon himself, bears the guilt and punishment of them in his own body and soul upon the tree, gives his own life a ransom for ours, that by his death we might live. He was buried, but he rose again the third day, having loosed the bonds of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. In this conflict with death and the grave, repentance was hid from his eyes. He knew what he was to go through, more than any of us can conceive of pain and agony, yet he would not change his purpose of grace, although he was to become obedient unto death, the most tormenting, the most shameful, even the death of the cross. His enemies having brought him to the grave, and the sealed sepulchre, seemed then to have him in their power. So they thought: But here Jesus made his complete and eternal triumph. By his resurrection he swallowed up death in victory: For he did not rise as a private person, but as the first fruits of the dead, drawing the joyful harvest after him. The Lord is risen indeed, the head of the body, the church,

and has the power of an endless life to quicken all his members. In which most glorious prospect, the apostle, quoting the passage above mentioned, breaks out into these raptures of joy, seeing all his enemies vanquished, and nothing but bliss and glory before him---“ O death, where is thy sting, O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.” The law armed death with its sting, as the just wages of the transgression of the law: But Jesus our surety magnified the law by his holy life in all its precepts, and by his death in all its penalties. He died for our sins, and by his rising from the dead, he demonstrated that he had taken out its sting, and had disarmed it of its power to hurt: Nay had done much more---He had changed death into life. “ I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.” By faith in him we share in the triumph and glory of his resurrection, and have a new song put into our mouths, with which we may make the sweetest melody in our hearts, even when our breath is failing us: “ Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

These are scripture views of the almighty Jesus. Out of his infinite compassion he undertook to save his people from sin and death, the works
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of the devil. And he has done it. It is finished. He has put away sin by his sacrifice, and he completed his conquest of death by his resurrection. And has had witnesses of these gospel truths in all ages, whom he sent to preach repentance, and remission of sins, in his name. When it is the good pleasure of his own will to accompany the message with power from on high, then he blesses it by making it the ministration of righteousness and of life: As it is written, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth in him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life," already. The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath freed the believer from the law of sin and of death, and has also created in him a new life: He has given him a new birth into the spiritual world, and spiritual senses to fit him for spiritual enjoyments: For he is actually passed from death unto life. By the holy spirit as the agent, and by faith as the instrument, he is made a child of God, united to Christ, one with him, interested in him, and so closely joined to him, as the members are to the head, as to be a real partaker of all that he did upon earth, and of all that he is now doing for his redeemed in heaven. He has a good warrant, for he is not only permitted, but also commanded, to apply to himself all the privileges and blessings, which are contained in this large

large charter of grace. "Ye are complete in Christ, who is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead: And you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us; and he took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross, and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in that same ~~x~~cross." In this view of the almighty conqueror of all our enemies, and of his enabling us also by faith to come after him, conquering and to conquer, what thanks and praises should be given unto him? There is no possible evil, but he has removed it from us--and no possible good, but he has obtained the right, and gives the possession. We are complete in him, our head--completely circumcised in heart by his circumcision, so as to put off the body of sin, and risen indeed with him by the faith of his own operation: Through which we have the first resurrection from the grave of sin, and shall have the resurrection of

the body from the grave of death. He now gives the first as a sure earnest of the second. He raises us from the grave of sin, and quickens us to newness of life, and thereby gives us a lively hope, that we shall one day be with him and like him. In this hope the redeemed of the Lord have thus expressed their joys--We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners, in defiance of all our enemies--we need not fear sin, nor Satan, nor death, nor hell. Our Redeemer is strong, the Lord of hosts is his name. He for us men, and for our salvation, was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. And he has destroyed them. He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. His victory was complete, and in him we conquer. We come after him only to gather up the spoils of his triumph. Through faith in him the sting of death is taken out of the conscience, and thereby the fear of it out of the heart--A believer ought to say, and when he is in his right mind he says with joy and gratitude--"The Lord is my light, and my salvation, what then shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom then shall I be afraid? Yea, though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil--I need not fear any, because thou my Lord and Saviour hast promised to be with me, thy rod and thy staff, they shall comfort me." What an infallible antidote has

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our Jesus here provided against all guilty fears, and against all natural fears? These promises to his dying followers cannot fail. He who made them is almighty to fulfil them; and almighty to enable us to believe, that he will both support and comfort. Jesus, wonderful in his person, wonderful in all his works and ways—He has changed the very nature of death. He has turned it into life. Whosoever believeth in him shall never die, but is passed already from death unto life. The Holy Spirit has put him into present possession of a life laid up with Christ, out of the reach of death. So that when his body expires, it falls asleep in the Lord, and his spirit enters upon an eternal triumph of life and glory, among the Spirits of just men made perfect.

O what a deliverance is this from the bondage of sin, and the terrors of the grave. It is the peculiar blessedness of believers in Jesus: For the natural man cannot but fear death, and look upon it as his enemy. He has no prospects, but what are bounded by time. His whole happiness is in the present world, and in the enjoyment of what he calls the blessings of it. He was laying fine plans, and hoping to live to execute them—heaping up riches—living in the unrestrained liberty of sensual enjoyments—murdering his time—mispending his talents—without any concern about eternal things—When, lo, an enemy comes, and puts an end to all his schemes.

He dies. Perhaps he may be a sceptic, doubting of the certainty of a future state: He may wish there was none, but he can have no evidence: And if he continue to wish it, even to the last, O what a scene will open, when he meets a just and an angry God! He may be a materialist, and please himself with fancying, that what we call his soul, will vanish at his death into soft air: But the God of truth says, That when the dust shall return to the earth as it was, the spirit shall return to God who gave it: And in the morning of the resurrection Christ will reanimate the dust, and body and soul shall be united to live for ever. He may be one of the careless, quite unprepared, but when the messenger arrests him, he must go with him, and that in a moment. Perhaps he may be a moralist, trusting to his own goodness; he may fortify himself with arguments taken from Seneca, but these will furnish him with no armour, proof against the guilt of sin, or the sting of death. He may seek aids from philosophy, falsely so called, but its votaries professing themselves to be wise, in the hour of death found that they were fools. Every human help has failed, when most wanted. "But blessed is he, who hath the God of Jacob for his help, and whose hope is in the Lord his God: Who made heaven and earth, and all that therein is, who keepeth his promise for ever." Here is the Christian's never failing support. God, even

even his covenant God has promised to be with him, and to be his Saviour in death. God Jesus, almighty to keep his promise for ever, is his one hope, living and dying: And he is his gain both in life and death. If he has won Christ, he has lived to a blessed time, and whenever he dies, Christ will make death his friend, and will reconcile him to his going to the Lord, which is best of all. To look upon death as an enemy, to fear it, as if it could take from us any thing worth keeping, or as if it did not put us into the eternal possession of every thing worth enjoying, these are views of the resurrection of Jesus very dishonorable to his victories, and very injurious to our interest in him. He undertook to conquer death for us, as our surety. He has done it. He has swallowed up death in victory. He has made it our friend and our benefactor: For he has engaged to support us in our last moments. He never did, he never can fail any who put their trust in him. Experience has confirmed his faithfulness in all ages. His soldiers, whom he made valiant in fight, a goodly company whom no one can number, have triumphed gloriously—before death—in death—and after death.

Before death he prepared them to meet it in faith: For the great design of his gospel is to arm them against the guilt of sin, and the terrors of death. And they are good soldiers of Christ

Jesus

Jesus who put on this armour—who have learnt their exercise, and who by their daily battles keep their arms shining and bright. Looking to Jesus, the Captain of their salvation, for orders, for courage, for strength, for victory, all opposition falls before them. He enables them to fight the good fight of faith, and the more they conquer sin, the less they have to fear from death: For Christ is to them the whole armour of God, and the pieces of this armour are the graces of his Spirit. For with these the apostle says, in Ephesians, chap. vi. that Christ has perfectly equipped the armies of the Lord. They have the truth of Christ, the righteousness of Christ, the peace of God in Christ, faith in Christ, the word of Christ, hope in Christ, and prayer to Christ for fresh supplies of his Spirit, that he would enable them to make such a use of their armour, that they might get the victory over sin and death, and he might get all the praise. In this holy war He is every thing to them, and they find in him, and receive out of his fulness, whatever they want for the peace of their conscience, and for the happiness of their hearts. Sin is pardoned. Death is conquered. They experience the power of his resurrection, and being passed from death unto life, they have believing views of their own dissolution. We read of their deliverance from the fear of death, and we have examples of those who were more afraid of sin than
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of death, yea, who chose to go into a burning fiery furnace, rather than offend their God: Hear how they triumphed--“ Our God is able to deliver us, but if he does not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.” Hear the witness of another Christian hero, how he was enabled to look upon death--“ The holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me: But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” This was a great victory, but the case is not singular: In the same faith died the noble army of martyrs, of whom we read--“ That they overcame the accuser of the brethren by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.” And to this day, the Holy Spirit witnesses to the same truth, and seals it upon the consciences of believers in the hour of death. I call one evidence, a great Dignitary in our Church, a man of great learning, and never suspected of enthusiasm, being near his death he thus expressed himself--“ I cannot plead innocency of life, especially of my youth: But I am to be judged by a merciful God, who is not willing to see what I have done
amiss:

amiss : And though of myself I have nothing to present to him, but sins and misery : yet I know he looks not upon me now as I am of myself, but as I am in my Saviour, and hath given me, even at this time, some testimonies by his Holy Spirit, that I am of the number of his elect : I am therefore full of joy, and shall die in peace."

Thus the precious Jesus was in the prospect of death more desirable than life itself. So he was to them in dying. All these died in faith. They were his witnesses, that he kept every thing hurtful from them, and brought them in triumph to the end of their lives. That great company round his throne, who are crowned conquerors, testify for him that he did not leave them, nor forsake them one moment. He kept his word with them. He smoothed their bed in their sickness. He was tender over them, and wiped away all tears from their eyes. When fainting he gave them strong consolation, when he called them to meet death in all its terrors, to suffer in flames of fire, to be torn to pieces by wild beasts, to be tormented in every way that malice could invent, or the power of tyrants could inflict--He was with them--their Saviour and their God--the tender care of his heart, and the mighty power of his arm, were never more felt than when most wanted. He kept his peace ruling in their consciences always and by all means, and gave them to feel, that bodily pain
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could not lessen his love to them, nor abate or stop their love to him. I might bring a cloud of witnesses to prove the compassion of Jesus to his redeemed in their dying hours ; but let these two suffice: Dr. Thomas Goodwin was upon his death-bed, when his friend Mr. Collins came to visit him, and to pray with him, to whom he said, "He rejoiced that he was dying, and going to have a full and uninterrupted communion with God."

"I am going, said he, to the three persons, with whom I have had communion: They have taken me, I did not take them. I shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye: All my lusts and corruptions I shall be rid of, which I could not be here."

After mentioning these great examples of faith, Hebrews, chap. xi. he said, "All these died in faith: I could not have imagined I should ever have such a measure of faith as I have in this hour. My bow abides in strength. Is Christ divided? No. I have the whole of his righteousness. I am found in him, not in my own righteousness, which is of the law, but in the righteousness which is of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, who loved me and gave himself for me: Christ cannot love me better than he does, and I think I cannot love Christ better than I do: I am swallowed up in God."

The historian remarks, That with this assurance of faith and fulness of joy his soul left this world,

world, and went to see and to enjoy the reality of that blessed state of glory, of which, in a discourse on that subject, he had given a very lively description.

I may be permitted to call another witness to this blessed truth, a believer who just before his death addressed himself to his friends in these words—"My brethren, is not this very amazing to you. When I contemplate the holiness of God, I cannot but cry out, that I myself am vile, most vile: and then when I consider the justice of God, could any one imagine, but that I should be struck with most dreadful apprehensions of approaching judgment and deserved wrath? Instead of that, I am under no fear of the latter, and much desire the former. I long to appear before this holy just God: I have a righteousness to plead that is perfect. The holy Jesus is my security; and I cannot be disappointed: In Christ the justice of God is as much my security as his mercy: Here is a holiness that transcends that all of the angelic host. There is no charging my Redeemer with possible folly: O, I know I am pardoned for the sake of Jesus Christ, my only Lord and mediator: I am sure of it: I am fully, freely pardoned: I shall soon be thoroughly sanctified and fitted for glory: O, I want words to express my gratitude, to tell my joy: Adored be God, my Lord, my Saviour: This is the work of God alone: O unfathomable
love,

love, infinite condescension, unmerited, unbounded grace to a vile offender; I deserve hell: I enjoy heaven."

O thou that readest this honourable mention of the love of Jesus to his dying followers, may it be given thee to find him near to thee in that time of need! If thy faith be in him, doubt not. Take courage, and live up to thy privileges. Regard his promise. Observe his faithfulness to it. Depend upon his arm. Trust in him, and be not afraid. Since he has overcome death, why shouldest thou fear that it will overcome thee? Is not his victory thine? Whatever thou feelest in thyself; if nature shrink, and thou hast many uneasy thoughts about thy dissolution: remember that all thy salvation is in, and from him, and he has made thee a free gift of salvation, and of all the things which accompany salvation—He undertook it all—He has finished it all—He has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself—He has conquered death. It is now a vanquished foe. In his hand it is the royal way to the kingdom, the only way. Trust him, he will not suffer it to hurt thee. Trust him, and thou wilt find there is nothing in it, that ought to frighten thee. Breath may be failing thee, but Jesus will not fail thee. He has pronounced them blessed, he will infallibly make them blessed, who die in the Lord. Only believe, and thou wilt experience, that he has dying consolations for his dying friends.

They live in death. He makes them blessed in dying : yea, sometimes to encourage the faith of others, and to recommend his own grace, he has vouchsafed to give them, at the time of their death, a foretaste of the glory which was just going to be revealed. In this faith they leave the world, casting all their care for time and for eternity, for body and soul, upon him who careth for them. Jesus, into thy hand I commend my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me. O Lord, thou God of truth. I believe in the resurrection of the body : Thou hast promised it, and I hope it shall be done unto me according to thy word. Christ is the first fruits, and afterward they that are Christ's at his coming, when he will bring the joyful harvest with him ; therefore into his faithful hands I commit my body. I take my leave of it in faith. It is not possible, that the grave should hold me in any more than it could him. And I not only hope to be raised from the grave, but I shall be brought out of it in triumph, on that day of wonders, when Jesus Christ, the great God and our Saviour, shall change this my vile body, and shall make it like unto his own most glorious body. O what a change ! O what a miracle ! This very body, which is now sinful dust, shall be like the Son of God, who is the standard of all perfection--even this body of mine shall be conformed to his most glorious body ; although it be now an house, so infected
with

with the leprosy of sin, that it must be taken down, yet out of its ruins will the Lord raise it a monument to his eternal praise, even an habitation of God by his Spirit. Come then, thou blessed of the Lord, O welcome, welcome death--Thou art the smiling messenger from my Jesus, bringing with thee glad tidings of great joy--of a salvation secured from all possible evil, and the enjoyment of all possible good. In sure and certain hope of this complete and eternal salvation, I resign my body into thy hands, thou Lord of life, and giver of glory--I entrust it with thee to be kept against that day, when all that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this prospect, for believing views of it, for the earnest, and for some little foretaste of it, to the eternal Three be eternal praise. *Amen.*

Such are the hopes of a real christian, which he is warranted, which he is commanded to entertain in the hour of death, which God in his infinite grace actually favours his people with, to the strengthening of their faith, and to the silencing of unbelievers. Never did he display his faithfulness more signally than in our times. Many instances might be given, but I select one, who thus expressed himself to his friends surrounding his death bed.

“ My soul is abundantly comforted and refreshed: My body is dying, but my mind is still vigorous and alive: I feel the cold hand of death

death is actually upon me ; and you may feel it too, if you touch my feet and legs, they are once more clay. Blessed be God, death is no king of terrors to me. He is a welcome messenger, because sent by my heavenly Father. Here I am, O Lord, waiting thy pleasure ; ready to obey the summons : Thy will, O Lord, be done. Blessed be God, that the attack is made below : My head is as yet very clear and untouched, and till my heart feels the damp, I hope to be engaged in work suitable to a death bed : It is not to me a bed of languishing, or wasting : This poor remainder of a body is hardly capable of any greater decay, till it moulders in the grave ; and there let it moulder. Who would not part with it as it is ? It is now my burden, my bar to happiness, an hindrance to a lively spiritual communion with God. But, O my friends, it is united to Christ, and shall therefore one day become a glorious body. This corruption shall put on incorruption, and shall be for ever with the Lord." Thanks be to God for such a witness--may my latter end be like his.

CHAP. X.

The character of the persons, who have most reason to triumph in Christ.

THEY are such as know most of themselves, and have seen the deepest into the mystery of iniquity. The Holy Spirit has convinced them of sin--of original sin, the fountain from which all the streams flow of actual sin in thought, word, and deed. In this conviction he has put life and power: It is far more than a moral persuasion--he makes it practical and abiding: For the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus quickens the dead sinner, and making him free from the law of sin, and of death, gives him the faith of God's elect: And by the daily use and exercise of that faith makes him more sensible of his obligations to Jesus. In every act of faith he leads the believer out of self to the Saviour--humbles him that he may exalt Christ--empties him of self, that he may fill him with the good things of Christ--casts down, and keeps down every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and brings into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. In his hand, and by his blessing, this work prospers. The loftiness of man is humbled, and the haughtiness

ness of man is bowed down, and Jehovah alone is exalted in that day—according to the oracle of truth—“He shall glorify me”—which is the office of the Holy Spirit to testify of Christ, and to glorify Christ, by taking of the things of Christ, and by putting the believer into the possession of them.

In this school of humility every view that can be taken of self is abasing: And as the lesson becomes more and better experienced, sin more discovered in its exceeding wickedness, and more felt in its exceeding great danger, the believer is enabled to rejoice more in Christ Jesus, as he has less confidence in the flesh. And when he attains to the highest of his triumph, which he can have in Christ in this world, he is then the lowest in his own eyes—

When he looks back and surveys what he was by nature and practice—

When he considers, what he is now, although he be renewed by grace—

And when he looks forward to what he hopes to be at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ—

Every thing in the scripture doctrine, and every thing in scripture experience leads him to conclude—Behold, I am vile, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes: So that whenever he is tempted to glory, he has nothing left him to glory in, but the Lord: Self always abased, that Christ alone may be exalted.

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When he looks back to what he was by nature, and practice ; the more he knows, he will be the more deeply humbled, for what he was when under the law, and under sin, and for what he still feels of a body of sin and of death. He was the creature of God's power, made out of nothing---distinguished by his being in the image of God, and by being capable of communion with him in all the graces and blessings of his love. He was under the best law that could be given him for promoting God's glory and his own happiness. He was bound to perfect and continual obedience to it, and was left to his own will and power, that he should not offend in any one point: But upon his transgression he became liable to suffer the threatened pains and penalties of the broken law. Every right view of himself in this state ought to humble and to abase the sinner, and it effectually does, when the conviction is from God. He then finds that his nature was earthly, sensual, and having not the Spirit, it was alienated from the life of God. All his thoughts and actions were not only irregular, but also contrary to the holy law. His very imagination was evil, only evil, and that continually. His understanding was not only ignorant of spiritual things, but was darkness itself. His will was a rebel. His affections apostate, ever at enmity with God. Misery and destruction were in his ways : of the way of peace he had no knowledge, neither was there any fear of God before his eyes :

For although death and hell were threatened, and were ready to give him the just wages of his iniquity, yet he was quite careless and secure. Like the atheists of old, when warned of their approaching destruction by the prophet---“ Let us eat and drink, say they, for to-morrow we die.”

This true knowledge of the exceeding evil of sin, and the right humiliation for it, come by believing, and are the genuine fruits and effects of it. Legal conviction has guilt and bondage in it, and worketh sorrow unto death. But the conviction of the Holy Spirit reveals the remedy along with the disease, and produces such a repentance as is not to be repented of---a turning from sin to Christ---teaching us practically and daily, what we are in ourselves, and how much we want such an almighty Saviour, to teach us how to trust in him as our great high priest, and to live happy and holy under his government, which is perfect freedom. Every act of this faith is humbling. The believer is made to feel his need of that in himself, which he is commanded to trust in Christ for. And the more he is enabled to depend upon Christ, he will certainly have the less in himself. And when his whole dependence is as it ought to be, fixed upon Christ, he will come to the apostle's experience, even so to rejoice in Christ Jesus, as to put no confidence in the flesh. Herein consists the triumph of the Christian. In every step of his walk

walk and warfare he is led from self to Christ--kept humbled in his own eyes that he may exalt the Saviour--emptied of self that he may live upon the fulness of Jesus, and may thereby be taught to rest his heart in him at all times, and for all things.

With respect to sin, which is his daily burden, under which he is always sorrowing, yet in Christ he can always rejoice. The more he knows of the exceeding wickedness of sin, the more precious is Jesus, and the more he does value the blood of the Lamb of God, which cleanseth from all sin. In his conscience purged from guilt, he can triumph with exceeding great joy, that there is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus: For where sin abounded, grace does much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. His grateful acknowledgments are such as these--

I was even as others once---by nature a child of wrath, and an heir of misery---I was going on in the broad way of destruction---careless and secure---and I am quite astonished to see the danger that I was in---I tremble to behold the precipice which I was ready to fall over, when Jesus opened mine eyes, and by the light of his word and Spirit, shewed me my guilt and my danger, and put it into my heart to flee from the wrath to come. O what a most merciful escape!

I cannot think of it without adoring the compassionate Saviour, who remembered me in my low estate: For his mercy endureth for ever. And hath redeemed me from the hand of all mine enemies: For his mercy endureth for ever: Not unto me, not unto me in the least, but to the superabounding grace of my God be all the glory. That the Father would make me an object of his choice and love. That Jesus Immanuel would humble himself to be manifest in the flesh, and be obedient unto death, for me and for my salvation. That the Holy Ghost would give me a new birth into the spiritual world, and would quicken me into union with Jesus, and to the enjoyment of the Father's love in him--adored for ever and ever be the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity. That such a filthy sinner should be cleansed from all sin--that such an ungodly creature should be freely justified by grace--that such a miserable sinner should be blessed with all spiritual blessings---that such a weak creature should be strengthened mightily by the Spirit in the inner man, and when weakest in myself, then to be strongest in the Lord---O what riches! What unsearchable riches of grace are these! Abide with me, O thou Spirit of the Father and the Son, and keep me constantly dependent on the fresh supplies of thy divine influence. By thy daily teaching keep open to me the depth and mystery of iniquity, the exceeding wickedness of sin--of my sin, that

by thy holy inspiration I may live more by faith, and nothing may be suffered to hinder my growing fellowship with the Father and the Son, until I am admitted to full and eternal fellowship.

Amen.

Thus reflecting with self-aborrence upon what he was by nature, when he was under the law, and under sin, which is the transgression of the law, alive to sin, but dead to God—He is led to consider,

What he is now, although he be renewed by grace, a believer and a man in Christ: How he feels himself, after much and found experience of his title to salvation, and of his enjoyment of the things which accompany salvation—Every day and in every thing he has fresh matter for the deepest humiliation. He finds, that he is still a man in Adam---still he carries about him a sinful nature, an old man as well as a new, a body of sin with all its members, he has spirit, but he has also flesh, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh, nothing but corruption, as that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. The old man has flesh still, with all its appetites and lusts: The new man is by the Spirit of life, that is in Christ Jesus, alive to God. In the same person sin dwelleth, as we read, “When we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. And the new man liveth, who after God is created in
righteousness

righteousness and true holiness." The apostle in Romans, chap. vii. not only confesses that he had nature and grace in him at the same time, but also describes it at full length. Indwelling sin was his continual grief, and his heavy burden: An apostle in Christ, and yet he felt the plague of his own heart: And it was his daily cross, which he was forced to bear--and his constant enemy, against which he was always at war--no peace, no truce could be made. The flesh was ever lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these two with such unceasing opposition night and day, that he could not do the things that he would, either so continually or so perfectly. He describes this battle as it was carried on in his own experience, the two combatants striving in him for mastery. He was a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and as well instructed and armed as ever any believer was for this warfare, having on the whole armor of God, and yet wearied with this daily conflict, he is forced to cry out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He had no deliverance in or from himself, it was against himself that he fought, and of himself he was led to despair. But looking to Jesus he takes courage, assuring himself of a complete victory, and of an everlasting triumph in the Captain of his salvation--I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, (this is
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the conclusion of the whole matter) so then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

This is still the experience of every true believer, at all times, and upon all occasions: He has a practical comment upon the seventh chapter of the Romans in his own bosom: He has heartfelt experience of the warfare between the flesh and the spirit: He finds it hard fighting; harder, because it is continual—it will never cease so long as flesh is flesh, that is, so long as the believer lives in the body and in the present world. Indwelling sin never rests—it is like the troubled sea, always casting up its filthy motions, and then the most troublesome when he would be the freest from them. O what humbling lessons does he learn in all his approaches to God: He knows his privileges, and he wishes to live up to them, but he cannot. When he would draw near to God in the prayer of faith, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. On his bended knees desiring to confess his sins, and to humble himself under the mighty hand of God, imploring pardon through the redemption that is in the blood of the Lamb, and expecting it freely, as the most sovereign mercy that a poor sinner can receive—Alas, alas! even then shame and confusion cover his face. He desires to keep his thoughts from wandering, he would have his whole heart engaged in the duty, but he cannot.

His imagination is not to be restrained. When he would be uniting all his affections in fervent and effectual prayer---vain, foolish thoughts force themselves upon him---he drives them away as Abraham did the birds which came down upon the sacrifice, but they will return. He mourns, as well he may, for these distractions of his mind, and is deeply convinced, that a most holy God might justly condemn him for his very best devotions. He is therefore led to put them into the hands of the Mediator, that he may perfume them with much of his incense for their acceptance, and through his intercession, and through that only, he may obtain an answer of grace.

Neither can he trust in his praises any more than in his prayers. Let him praise ever so much, and ever so well, yet he can make no suitable acknowledgments for the blessing of creation. Once he was nothing: for his being at all---for such a being, rather than any other---for being made a man, and at first highly favoured with the image and friendship of God---who can express the noble acts of the Lord, or shew forth all his praise for the miracle of creation? But who can conceive, how great, how endless are the blessings of the new creation? For they are all gifts of God's grace---distinguishing and sovereign---given to sinners as sinners---to the chief of sinners---continued to the unworthy---increased to the unthankful---how great in their nature

nature---how invaluable the sum of them: The believer deeply impressed with these sentiments acknowledges that he is less than the least of all God's mercies, yea, he is sensible that he deserves the heaviest of the divine vengeance: So that his prayer, *God be merciful to me a sinner*, lays the foundation of his very best praises. He who has most forgiven will love most. He who feels what he really is among the chief of sinners, will be among the chief of those worshippers who ascribe all their salvation to God and the Lamb. The humblest amongst them will feel that they have most reason to be thankful. But still their praises are no payment. They must receive fresh grace to praise with, and more grace to praise better. The debt increases by the addition of fresh gifts of grace, and leaves the believer nothing to glory in but the Lord—to be saved—to feel it—to enjoy it by faith—to be made, and to be kept thankful, giving all the glory where it is due; these are among the mercies which endure for ever.

In this school of self-abasement he is taught to be humbled for his short attainments in the scriptures, read, or preached, or meditated on. How seldom does he attend the word, as that congregation did—"Behold we are all here present before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." This preparation of heart was from the Lord. He disposed Cornelius and
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his family to receive the word aright, and his blessing came upon them in hearing it: For while Peter was speaking, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word. And it would be so still, if there was the same dependence on his grace, and the prayer of faith for his teaching along with the word. How little is this depended upon under hearing, although the profit be entirely from him: How seldom is the mixing faith with it received and acknowledged, therefore the memory keeps little impression of the word, and in heart it is not fruitful as it ought to be. On all these accounts the believer mourns and is humbled before God. He feels it to be true, "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: For to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not." He is sensible of these failings and distractions, even when he labours to be most free from them. He is going to the Lord's table to be fed and feasted, hoping that he is one with Christ, and Christ is one with him. He would gladly partake of the fruits and blessings of this union by communion with Christ, by receiving the bread of life, and the cup of salvation, according to Christ's holy institution. He comes in faith to eat the flesh of Christ, and to drink his blood, in grateful remembrance of him--according as he hath been taught--The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ

Christ which was given for me, preserve my body and soul unto eternal life---I take and I eat this bread, and I take and I drink this cup in remembrance that Christ died for me, and I desire to feed on him in my heart by faith with thanksgiving. In this service he would have his whole soul engaged, that nothing might interrupt his communion with his Beloved. But vain thoughts, which lodge within him, will break out. They intrude, although most unwelcome guests, into this banquet of love: So that he is constrained to cry out, Lord Jesus, pardon the failings of my holy things; I come to the throne of thy grace, that I may obtain mercy, and may find more grace to help me in every time of need.

When he is led to consider what is the cause of all these failings--O what an abiding lesson of humility has he to learn! He sees that they all spring from the bitter root of unbelief, and are the fruits of remaining corruption; which can only be kept down, and conquered, as the strength of Christ apprehended by faith prevails over them. Self, pride, legality, nurse them: They have their being, their activity, their power, from those fleshly lusts which war against the soul, and render the whole life of the believer one continued act of self-denial. He has still a body of sin, with all its members, mixing with every duty, so that he cannot ground his faith and hope upon the best of them. The
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work of Jesus upon earth, the intercession of Jesus in heaven, are the foul ground of his confidence towards God. His motive is good—he aims at pleasing God in all things, he would do his will, and suffer his will, as it is his bounden duty with faith and patience. His end is good—he would gladly keep the glory of God in his eye, and direct all he does to it, as his elder brethren do in heaven. But he cannot. When the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. Yet he is not so discouraged as to give over and cease his approaches to God, because of his infirmities. Having obtained help of God he fights on the good fight of faith. He does not leave off praying because he is not so spiritual as he desires to be: But he is rather more earnest and fervent. The Spirit helping his infirmities, keeps him in a humble dependence upon Jesus waiting on him for a due sense of his wants, for the acceptance of his prayers for a supply of them, for pardoning the failings of them, for more faith in them, and for enabling him to continue instant in prayer, according to the divine command, that men ought always to pray and not to faint, which supposes them to be kept in a praying frame, and to use the means which Saint Jude recommends for the obtaining of these blessings, “But ye beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for

the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

As he is not weary of his prayers because they are not so spiritual as he could wish: So neither is he weary of his praises, although they fall far short of what such a Saviour deserves, and of what he would acknowledge with all possible gratitude: Because he falls short, he aims higher. He feels himself under infinite obligations to the Father for his love, to the Son for his salvation, and by the supply of the Spirit's grace he is made sensible, that he is not only less than the least of divine mercies, but if he had his just deserts, he should have judgment without mercy. This lays the foundation for his highest praises. The faithful witness for Jesus makes the believer willing to be beholden to him for every mercy; yea, to glory in being a pensioner upon his fulness: From which he receives grace for grace, that in all things he may be giving of thanks: According to the Lord's favor to his people, informing them to take with them words, and turn to the Lord, and say unto him, "Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render the calves of our lips," which is the sacrifice of the New Testament worshippers, who through Jesus the mediator offer the sacrifice of praise continually; that is, the fruit of their lips, giving thanks to his name, wishing, praying to do it with

with some of the praises of heaven, as one said, "I will hope continually, and I will yet praise thee more and more."

As these prayers and praises are grounded upon faith in the divine promises, this makes the believer a diligent reader of the scriptures. He does not neglect his bible, because he has not yet attained the perfect knowledge of every part of it. For that very reason he studies it more: he prays more over it, grows more thankful for the divine power, which still accompanies it, and studies and prays that he may experience more of this power: It has been the means of making him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. He finds it also to be the food of this faith---it nourishes him, and he grows thereby. He hears, reads, meditates, and keeps on praying to the Holy Ghost to write the scriptures upon his heart, and to make his life a fair copy of them. And what he thus learns, preserves him in a settled dependence upon the faithfulness of God to his word and promise. And he is not disappointed: He finds all the scripture which was given by the inspiration of God is still profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. This blessing he has in his bible. The more he can mix faith with it, the more precious it becomes. His
bible

bible is his library. The study therein makes him wise for eternity : which is the superlative excellency of bible knowledge, of which Jesus thus speaks, " Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors : For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord."

Thus in the use of means he is kept humble and dependent, exercising the true gospel poverty of spirit in self-abasement, and so far from being stopped that he rather glories and triumphs in his infirmities. The opposition which they give helps him forward, they are always driving him out of self to Christ, teaching him the necessity of the supplies of the Spirit, making him more diligent, and keeping him more humble in the use of the means : And thus he learns to live more by faith upon Christ, and to seek more close communion with him, and his fulness, especially at his table. He does not absent himself from it, because he has not the fellowship there, so close, intimate, and abiding, as he could wish, or because the last time he was there he was not so lively as he used to be, or because he was unworthy, and full of complaints. He has tasted that the Lord is gracious : And this taste has increased his hunger and thirst, the food which he wants, he does not carry with him, but he goes to receive it. When he hears his Lord's command—Take, eat this bread---drink this cup---

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Do ye this in remembrance of me.—He obeys believing the promise: This is my body given for you: This is my blood shed for you. The more faith in the promise, there will be the more appetite, and the more nourishment received from the spiritual food; for then the Holy Spirit puts his influence into the elements, and the communicant eats the flesh of Christ indeed, and drinks his blood indeed, having by faith communion with him in the bread and wine. At this table the believer is fed, nourished, and feasted with the bread that cometh down from heaven, even angels' food: for he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever: According to the Lord's own promise, "Whofo eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." The believer has this in his eye, both in what the banquet is now, and in what it is the pledge and earnest of, when it shall be realized. Faith gives a substance to the things promised and hoped for. It has the earnest and the pledge of them: As certainly as we have the one, so certainly shall we have the other. A faithful God gives us this security—Whofo is one by faith with Jesus shall sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb: Whofo eateth and drinketh at his table here in faith, shall infallibly eat and drink with him at his table in his kingdom of glory. The sure and certain hope of this makes our present feast at
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the Lord's supper an happy foretaste of that eternal banquet, when he will vouchsafe to admit us to the honors of his table, and of his kingdom. O blessed, most blessed time! The prospect is animating, it brightens the darkest day of affliction, refreshes the spirits under the heaviest trials, and is a rich cordial under the deepest feeling of indwelling sin. Where Christ is, all is blessed. Union with him is heaven begun, and this the believer is called to enjoy; even to enjoy communion with him in all he is and has. Christ is one with him. Christ will not leave him nor forsake him: nothing is able to separate the members from the Head. He who has begun the good work has given the fullest security that he will not leave it unfinished. He will carry it on unto the end: For he is faithful who hath promised. And the apostle applies the words spoken to Joshua, and says that they were spoken also to us, that we might trust and not be afraid: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein. For then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage: Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: For the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest." And he went out strong in the Lord, and

in the power of his might. He fought the Lord's battles, and prospered until the whole land was subdued before him. There failed not aught of any good thing, which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass. Even so shall it be to the whole Israel of God. Every good soldier of Christ Jesus shall be kept safe by his almighty power, and under his banner shall fight the good fight of faith, until he obtains the promised inheritance, which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. He has taken possession of it in their name, as their surety, and not one of them can perish: For he keeps the inheritance for them, and them for it: yea, the day is hastening on, when he will present all his redeemed unto the Father. "Of those whom thou hast given me have I lost none; Behold I, and the children whom thou hast given me."

On all these accounts it is evident, that a believer every day, and in every thing, finds matter for the deepest humiliation. He has still a body of sin, remaining corruptions, daily infirmities, and short comings. All that he has of his own abases him in his own eyes: so that his triumph is never in himself. His salvation with all its graces and blessings depends entirely upon what he is in Christ. On this foundation he may rest safely always, notwithstanding he has nothing of his own to glory in. Most of his mistakes and
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miserics come from his seeking to be independent of Christ--hoping to find that in himself, or in the world, which is only in Christ. Self love is unwilling to be beholden to Christ for every good thing: It is always trying to put some confidence in the flesh: But the believer is commanded, and is taught to deny self--to put it upon the cross--and to crucify it daily with its affections and lusts. As Christ is exalted, self goes down. As Christ is beloved, self is not only denied, but is also abhorred. The prophet Ezekiel in the thirty-sixth chapter describes the very height of the experience of a great believer, who is blest with the abundant graces of the Holy Spirit: The result of which is, "Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doing that were not good, and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities, and for your abominations: Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you; be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel." Such is the genuine working of true grace--It lays the sinner low at the Saviour's feet, abased and humbled to the dust--Behold, I am vile--I abhor myself, and I repent in dust and ashes. The sense of God's distinguishing and sovereign mercy brings all high thoughts of self into subjection to Christ Jesus, and teaches the believer to walk humbly with his God, ascribing all his salvation to the

praise of the glory of the exceeding riches of God's grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus: That according as it is written, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Thus it is evident, that when the believer looks back upon what he was by nature, or considers what he is now by grace, he has nothing of his own to boast of, yet even in this continual warfare between the flesh and the spirit, in Christ Jesus he may rejoice even to a triumph, a jubilee of joy. But the grand triumph is yet to come. The best glorying in the Lord here is only a prelude to it. Now we have the espousals with our heavenly bridegroom, but then the marriage will be consummated. Now we are kept waiting in hope for the crown of righteousness, but that will be our coronation day. What a day will it be! What wonders and miracles! The promises, exceeding great and exceeding precious, will then have their full and everlasting accomplishment by a faithful God, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them who have believed. When they shall see him face to face---shall be with him where he is---shall be like him, and made capable of enjoying the honours, and riches, and pleasures of his kingdom, in their fulness of blessedness for evermore.

CHAP. XI.

The eternal triumph.

THIS is the great lesson which the believer is learning, till he comes to the end of his faith--what is promised him, and what he hopes to be at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the centre, to which all his experience tends : And while he keeps it in view, it so enlivens and animates his prospect, that come what may, he goes on his way rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." And by his holy inspiration he opens the eyes of the understanding, both to understand what is revealed, and also to know the things that are freely given to us of God : For great as they are, endless as they are, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned : But he that is spiritual has spiritual senses given him to exercise upon spiritual things--he is made certain of their reality--his faith gives a substance to the things hoped for, and evidence to the things not seen--an hope that never maketh ashamed--an evidence
very

very clear and satisfying---sometimes he can triumph in hope of the glory of God, when the Holy Spirit sheds abroad in his heart the Father's love, and bestows great joy and peace in believing. But he who is thus taught of God knows only in part. An apostle knew no more. The best of our present enjoyment is only a foretaste of the heavenly banquet. But even this little is of such a nature, and has such efficacy, that when it is truly believed, it influences the whole man, while he looks not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. They are not seen by the eye of the body, but are visible by the eye of faith; so we read, "Come, taste and see, how gracious the Lord is." By this eye of faith Moses saw him that is invisible: And this sight so affected him, and had such an influence upon his heart and life, that he lived above the world with all its temptations. This is the victory that overcame the world, even his faith. The same sight still works the same effect---producing a real value for spiritual and eternal things, and forming the heart to love and to practise the apostle's rule---My conversation is in heaven, from whence also I look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

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In the scripture view of our victory in Christ, there are two great points, which will take in all that is revealed of our eternal triumph, namely, The complete conquest of all our enemies--and the full and eternal enjoyment of all possible good. These two truths come now under our consideration; and if we can meditate upon them under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and mix faith with his revelation, we shall have a good warrant to begin those praises, which will never end, and to sing in harmony with all the redeemed our everlasting jubilee.

When we come to the end of our faith, even the eternal salvation of our souls, our victory is described to be a perfect deliverance from all evil--from sin, from suffering. Sin has brought all pain into the world--miseries upon the body--miseries upon the soul--spiritual wickedness--numerous hosts of foes--mighty principalities and powers--it has armed thousands, yea millions of them for our destruction--made us our own enemies by enslaving us to divers lusts and passions, making us the prey to earthly, sensual, devilish tempers--and as if there was not suffering enough in the world, filling us with many imaginary fears, which occasion real suffering. At last come the wages of sin--death with its terrors--hell with its torments. O what a deliverer! what a deliverance! Not one enemy left. They are all brought under, and subdued, to rise no
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more. The Captain of our salvation has vanquished them for us. His victory is the earnest of ours. His was complete, so is ours. No sin, no suffering can come near the habitation of his holiness. Indeed he suffered once for sin, but he put it away by that sacrifice of himself. By faith we have the benefit of his suffering, a conscience purged from guilt, no condemnation left, no charge from any enemy. God himself justifies, God himself sees us, accepts us, glorifies us, in and with his Son: For in that day he will present us to his Father without spot of sin unto eternal salvation.

Of this blessed and complete victory over all sin, and all suffering, the prophet Isaiah had a delightful prospect, speaking of it in these words, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and shall come to Sion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." O give thanks unto the Lord, Jehovah, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever: Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy: They have as much to thank their Redeemer for, as any creature possibly can have: His ransomed were under sin, helpless, miserable, dying sinners: From this slavery he bought them with an inestimable price, and they are become his property, his peculiar people, who have through him liberty

berty to return to God, and to serve him without fear on earth, and to bless him for giving them freedom to come to Zion, to the city of the living God, with songs of gratitude and praise: They have everlasting joy upon their heads--crowned conquerors: They have the joys of heaven, and the gladness of eternity in their hearts, which exclude all pain, and all sorrow--no fear can enter there--not one sigh. The Lord himself is their portion, and they shall reign with him for ever and ever.

The beloved John was favoured with a view of the same eternal conquest which the ransomed of the Lord shall have over all their enemies, and he speaks of it thus, "And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more curse, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: For the former things are passed away: And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new." This is Jesus, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who reigneth, the Lord God omnipotent for this very purpose, that this scripture may be fulfilled to the uttermost, and to eternity. He was the word made flesh, who tabernacled
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amongst us, being that most holy temple which God pitched and not man: Out of whose fulness believers receive all grace, and all glory: The compassions of Jesus are like himself, infinite and endless. He loves his redeemed too well to let either sin or sorrow come near them. They might have been holy mourners in their pilgrimage, when they went through the valley of Baca, but now he has wiped away their tears, all tears from their eyes. The curse that caused them he has removed. That death, the wages of which they deserved, he has changed into life. The pillars in his house, which are to get out no more, are thereby delivered from sorrow, and crying, and from every pain: All the former things are passed away—sin is no more—pain is no more. Into the kingdom of Jesus nothing of the old man is suffered to enter: For he creates all things new. The Lord from heaven makes all his people like himself, conformed to his own image in righteousness and true holiness. A more perfect victory cannot be imagined, than to have enemies so vanquished, all enemies, that they shall never have entrance into the kingdom of God and his Christ. When believers shall come to the end of their faith, they shall not only be thus saved from all possible evil, but who can conceive what their actual enjoyments will then be? To be saved from all sin, from all the effects of sin is a great mercy, yet it is only a
part

part of our salvation. But looking at the world lying in wickedness, beholding the variety of pains and miseries in it, from which no one is exempt—no state of life free from them—the palace as full of them as the cottage—kingdoms convulsed—infidelity spreading its poisonous influence, and attempting to destroy all good order and government—old age bringing its infirmities, and death hastening—it is certainly a great deliverance, that none of those evils can approach us any more. Blessed be God the Saviour for this great mercy. It is through his grace, that his kingdom of glory will be kept in perfect peace, no evil, no fear of evil shall for one moment interrupt the happiness of his subjects. But what is this compared to the actual enjoyment of all possible good: Who is able to declare fully what this will be at the appearing of Jesus the great God? We must wait for the full manifestation of the sons of God: But yet there is a great deal revealed, which belongs to us and to our children: And if we can read it in faith, with prayer, and with a continual dependence upon the teaching and application of the Holy Spirit, he will give us to form our hearts and lives upon the certainty of what he has revealed: For our conversation will then be in heaven, and we shall have both the knowledge, and also the experience of heavenly things, growing according to our faith. The word revelation signifies taking
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off the veil or covering from any thing, that it may be seen clearly: In the scripture sense it is removing the veil from heavenly things, which is the work of the Holy Spirit, creating spiritual senses to exercise upon those heavenly things: Of which the natural man can have no just ideas; for he cannot understand nor receive the things that are freely given to us of God: But he that is taught of God has evidence given him of the reality and of the blessedness of those things, which are revealed, and by faith enjoyed. When such an one reads what God said to Abraham, "After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." He reads it for himself: He makes the promise his own, and trusts in it as steadfastly as if God had spoken it to him by a voice from heaven; For so is he warranted to apply it by the apostle; now it was not written for his sake alone, but for us also: No scripture being of any private interpretation. The gift of grace to Abraham was nothing short of an infinite good—for it was God himself: I will be thy God. What is meant by this relation has been largely treated of in the former volumes. It is only needful to add, that it denotes the relation in which the Holy Trinity stand to believers, and the covenant engagements to them. God is theirs--He is their Father, the Son is their Saviour, the Spirit of life has enabled them

them to receive the Son, and they are one with him, he dwelling in their hearts by faith, and through him they are one with his Father: As the Lord said in his prayer—"Neither pray I for these alone, the apostles, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." This prayer was for all the chosen of the Father, given to the Son, redeemed by him, and in due time quickened by the Spirit, and brought into the same covenant relation, and partakers of the same covenant blessings, as Abraham was. What was promised to him, was promised to all that walk in the steps of his faith, the whole family and household of faith--It is as if God had said, Fear not, believer, I myself, Jehovah in Trinity, will be your present salvation to shield you from all sins and enemies, and I myself will be your exceeding great reward. Who can tell what the believer shall then be, when this promise shall be fulfilled? When he shall be brought as near to the God-head, as a creature can possibly be, joined to the Lord Jesus by the Holy Spirit, an habitation of God through the Spirit, and through Jesus unto the Father, and in this holy and blessed communion, finding an eternal heaven of happiness, an exceeding great reward. When it is received in this its fulness, it is a reward, but of grace, a gift of sovereign mercy--great, something

thing worthy of the great God—like himself—exceeding great, eternally great, O, Holy Ghost, keep the hope of it lively: O make it every day more lively, till, through thy blessing, I come to know it as it is.

The Psalmist, speaking of this happiness, suits his description to our present method of understanding spiritual things, as they are imaged to us by material. The pleasures of our senses are made use of to give us ideas of that happiness which is to be found in God: For it is all in him; He is heaven. The enjoyment of him in glory is the heaven of heavens. “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness: For thou wilt shew me the path of life, in thy presence is the fulness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” All this, great and endless as it is, belongs to them who have God for their God: For when they are admitted into his presence they shall be made like him—O marvellous change—capable of enjoying him, so as to be quite satisfied—finding in him a fulness of joy—pleasures divinely great, abundant, a river of pleasures—yea a fountain of pleasures springing up into everlasting life. Every sense shall be gratified to the uttermost, and that for evermore. Blessed be God for this unspeakable gift: And has he not herein vouchsafed us matter of triumph? May not the believer, ought he not,
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to rejoice with exceeding great joy, who has this prospect before him? Who that is out of heaven can have more reason than he has? Survey it, O my soul: Take a narrow review of it. Examine over and over again the Psalmist's description of it, and see what can be added to make it absolutely perfect. If nothing can, if it be as full as God can make it, may my heart grow in holy desires after the glory that is to be revealed, and triumph in the God of my salvation.

Our Lord gives us the same description in these words, speaking to his apostles, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me--(in the surest, fullest manner that it can be conveyed)--that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The king of this holy land is Immanuel--God Jesus: He is the King of kings, the Lord creator of all worlds, and the government of them all is upon his shoulders, and the names of his redeemed are written upon his heart. For them he has made abundant provision, that they may feast with him at his table, and may be receiving out of his fulness every grace that can make them completely and eternally blessed: For they shall sit down with him upon his throne, and shall share with him in all his royalties, blessing and adoring him in their everlasting songs of triumph. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins
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in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*"

The apostle John calls upon us now to begin the heavenly song: And he would have us to do it with the sweetest melody in our hearts, praising our sovereign Lord, who has taken our nature into union with himself, in order that by his Spirit we might be joined to him our glorified head, and might by faith partake of his holy and heavenly nature. No words can describe more fully the dignity to which by virtue of this union we shall be exalted: Nay it is not to be conceived at present how great it will be. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not: Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know, that when he shall appear we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is: And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure." O what a dignity is this: What upon earth is to be compared for one moment to it--Sons of God--Sons of Adam, who have borne the image of the earthly, advanced to bear the image of the heavenly. This is a glory which surpasseth all understanding. It did not yet appear as it is to the beloved John: He knew as much of it, as perhaps ever man did, but it was far greater than

than his knowledge. He knew it but in part: He was indeed sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. But the earnest is not the inheritance itself. It is only a pledge and a security, that at the appearing of Jesus Christ, the great God and our Saviour, we shall be put into full possession. At present we have it in the promise of the God of truth: And faith in its promise begets a hope, that will never make us ashamed: Because it will keep us patiently waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, when we shall come to the eternal enjoyment of all the riches, and pleasures, and honours of our sonship with Christ our glorified Head.

The apostle would lead us also to consider the fountain from whence all this blessedness springs, from the Father---what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us. The love expressed by this name, Father, has no parallel. It had no beginning, and it will have no ending. It is from everlasting to everlasting---bringing with it out of its infinite ocean all the streams of grace, which make glad the city of God, and never stopping till it return with all the happy objects of his love to the same great ocean again. The apostle would have us to behold, and to admire the miracles of the Father's love, which he purposed and wrought out, and bestowed upon us, who are sinners even as others, and

yet to the everlasting praise and glory of grace--chosen--called--effectually brought into the family and household of faith by the Spirit of adoption, and ennobled--sons of God--what an exaltation--what a blessedness ! Made the children of God, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ--with him who is Lord of all--admitted to share with him in his kingdom, his crown, his glories : According to his own prayer, " Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me, where I am, that they may behold my glory, may be with me, may be like me. O what an animating view is here for the highest rejoicing of faith and hope ! Christ by taking our nature into union with himself has advanced it into the greatest dignity of which it is capable : For it is heaven to be with him, where he is in his glory ; like him, conformed to that standard of all perfection in body and soul, perfectly and eternally : What a hope should this beget and cherish ? even a hope full of glory and immortality ! Especially as all this honour is according to the Father's covenant purposes : For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren : Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we say to these things ? Can there
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be greater grace shewn from the God of all grace? Can there be higher honour conferred, than to be so exalted from the depth of sin and misery, as to be raised to the honours of sonship, even to a conformity to the Son of God. O what sentiments had that blessed man of it, when he said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake after thy likeness; for thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is the fulness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Conformity to Jesus brings with it this fulness of joy; and the hope of it is an active and a lively grace: For every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as Christ is pure. This is the mark at which the believer aims, he wishes to be like Christ, and to be more like him: He would feel more of the power of the cross of Christ to crucify in him the body of sin, and more of the power of the risen Jesus, that there may be a real growth into him; and that in all things: Thus he purifies his heart and life by that faith in Jesus; of which the apostle thus speaks, "Brethren, I have not yet attained what I am striving for; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

These are some of the scripture authorities, from which this conclusion may be fairly drawn, that a believer, whatever view he may take of himself, either from what he was, when dead in trespasses and sins, or from what he now is, quickened by the Spirit of Christ, and living by faith, yet crying out under a sense of his corruptions, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me; yet he may thank God through Jesus Christ his Lord: For he is warranted, he is commanded to rejoice in the Lord always, and to triumph in the God of his salvation. And he has enough given him in hand to exercise that strong faith, which will administer strong consolation, even great, very great joy and peace in believing: For the word of God cannot be broken, his promises cannot fail, his covenant engagements are immutable, given as infallible security to the believer, that his faith may not stagger at any difficulty, but looking to a faithful God he may go on his way rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

These are some of the blessed effects of looking to Jesus, and living by faith upon him and his fulness. In this way there is continual matter of triumph. Let the believer look back on what he was by nature, or on what he is now in his renewed state by grace, or looking forward to the glory that is to be revealed at the appearing of his Saviour, when he shall be with him in the kingdom

kingdom which cannot be moved, and shall be like him, all his members conformed to their most glorious Head, and partaking of his divine riches, and honours, and pleasures, what upon earth can exceed such a prospect! What can administer greater happiness, than to have the evidence of it kept clear and open! What can make life more comfortable, and the end of our faith more desirable, than such great and blessed things! promised and given most freely in time, yea, in the fullest manner that almighty love can bestow them in eternity.

For such mercies bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.

O thou beginning and ending, the first and the last, the author and the finisher of the faith, Jehovah Jesus, I have been looking up to thee for thy divine teaching, and I am still looking up to thee for thy divine blessing on this my offering. It is a poor mite, which I would cast into thy treasury, as my dying testimony for the truth and for the power of thy gospel. Be pleased to accept it out of thine infinite condescension. Thou knowest the heart of thy servant: Whatever is right in it is thine own, the work of thine own grace. Failings there are, and they are mine: Of thy mercy pardon them. And make use of this little treatise, as it shall seem best to thy godly wisdom, for the increase of faith in thy church, and for the advancement

advancement of thine own fame and glory ; that more honour may be put upon thy word, more dependence exercised upon thy faithfulness, and there may be a growing conformity to it in the hearts and lives of thy people. Be pleased, merciful Saviour, to accompany the reading of it with thy Spirit for these purposes, and I shall be amply rewarded. May thy grace, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all. *Amen.*

THE

THE
SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE
OF THE
SACRAMENT
OF THE
LORD'S SUPPER,
BRIEFLY STATED.

Then said Jesus unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. John vi. 53.

SECRETURE DOCTRINE

317 90



LORD & SUPPER

GITA 10 11 13 14 15

1. The first of the three main parts of the book is devoted to a general survey of the history of the world, from the beginning of time to the present day. This part is written in a simple and straightforward manner, and is intended to provide the reader with a general knowledge of the world and its history.

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THE following short treatise was drawn up at the request of a charitable lady, and published for the benefit of the poor. The design of it was to open to them the nature and use of the holy sacrament: and it was thought the most proper method, not to be large and full upon the subject, but to lay it before them in one view, that they might understand it more easily, and remember it the better. Reader, before thou openest it, ask him, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, to accompany thy perusal of it with his grace and blessing: And if it be of any service to thee, give the glory to God, and pray for the author.

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W. R.

TO THE DOCTRINE OF
THE
SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE
OF THE
SACRAMENT, &c.

THE sacrament of the Lord's Supper was ordained by Christ himself. Before his passion he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave it to his disciples, as the outward and visible sign of his body broken; and he took wine and blessed it, and gave it to them, as the outward and visible sign of his blood poured out, and shed for the sins of the world. And then he commanded them, and us, to continue to do the same in remembrance of him; so that we must first know what we are to remember of him in this ordinance, before we can keep it aright. We must consider the scope and design of it; for what end Christ left us these memorials of his

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his body and blood; upon what motive he required us to partake of them; and what benefit we are to receive thereby. For these reasons it is of great consequence clearly to understand the nature and use of the Lord's Supper. Reader, I hope thou seest the importance of it in a strong light. May God give thee a right judgment in this weighty matter. Consider then, that

I.

You have an immortal spirit within you, whose life of happiness depends as much upon God the Father of spirits, as your body does upon the food and elements of this world.

MOSES has given us this account of the two parts, of which man is composed. "The Lord
" God formed man of the dust of the ground,
" and breathed into his nostrils the breath of
" life, and man became a living soul," Gen. ii. 7. The bodily part was formed of the dust of the ground, but the spiritual part was immediately infused, and breathed from God; and as they had a different original, so they go to different places; when the body dies, it returns to dust, but the spirit, the breath of life, returns to God that gave it. While man continued innocent, his soul had a life of happiness dependent upon God; for as it is created, it must be dependent, and its life must be supported by that being, on
I whom

whom it depends. And this being is God: "For with thee is the fountain of life," says the Psalmist, Psal. xxxvi. 9. All spiritual life flows from God, as from its proper fountain, and is supported by a vital union with him, as much as the body is supported by a vital union with the food and elements of this world: what these are to the life of the body, that is God to the life of the soul, "for he holdeth our souls in life," Psal. lxvi. 9. He holdeth and maintaineth the soul in its spiritual life. And when there was no sin in the world it was an happy life. So long as all things continued very good, the soul enjoyed sweet and blessed communion with God. It walked in the light of his countenance, and the sense of his continual presence filled it with peace, and love, and joy. But this happy state of things did not last long: for

II.

Your soul lost this life of happiness by sin.

THE whole book of God proves this truth. In express words it says, that fallen man is "alienated from the life of God," Eph. iv. 18. being estranged from that life, which God hath given to, and supported in man, while he continued innocent. Upon sin's entering into the world, the sentence took place, *dying thou shalt die*, the body became mortal, and the soul was alienated

alienated from that divine support, wherein its life of happiness consisted, and died from God, which is the worst kind of death. The vital union between him and the soul was broken; "for your sins have separated between you and your God," Isa. lix. 2. they have separated between you and the fountain of life, they have cut off all communion with him; by which means being dead in trespasses and sins, which we all are by nature, the soul is as dead to the offices of spiritual life, as a cold lifeless corpse is to the offices of animal life.

If these scriptures do not appear to you with convincing evidence, consult matter of fact. How is the case with your own soul? Was not you by nature dead to God? If not, then you was always alive to the things of God. From your very infancy you took no delight in childish diversions, much less in sin, in pride, in envy, in lying, and swearing, or in any act of uncleanness; but your heart was full of love to God, and every expression of that love was delightful. You knew no joy like that of prayer. To be continually pouring out your praise and thanksgiving to your Creator, was your heaven. The world so dead to you, that its strongest temptations had no force. Wealth and honor, and pleasure, and whatever is called great and mighty, had no charms compared with devotion.

Say,

Say, was this always the sweet and holy frame of your soul from the first dawning and opening of reason? Was your heart always thus full of love to God, and always thus happy in communion with him? Were your affections never drawn away by any worldly objects, whereby you robbed God of that continual service of all your faculties, which was his due? Can you lay claim to this perfect uninterrupted obedience? Surely, you will not: for what man is he that liveth, and sinneth not? Nay, what man is there that has not found a coldness and deadness of his affections, when he tried to fix them upon God, and the things of God? Have not you found it in yourself? Do you not now find it? Try then to pray for two or three hours together without one wandering thought. You cannot. Why then, these are evident proofs, that your soul is alienated from the life of God, and

III.

You have no power in yourself to recover this life of God in the soul.

THE law runs in this style, *the soul that sinneth, it shall die.* Death is the wages of sin, you have sinned; for all have sinned, and God is just to give you your wages. He has promised them, and he is faithful and true to fulfil his promises. He must fulfil them, unless you can by some means
be

be restored to his favour, and recover the life of grace in the soul; for if there be truth in God, *the soul that sinneth it shall die*. But you can do nothing to merit the recovery of this life, because your whole nature is sinful and guilty. You are in the state of a condemned malefactor, with this peculiar circumstance of distress, that you have not even a desire to apply for pardon. Your soul is so absolutely enslaved to sin, that it loves its prison and its dungeon. Every faculty is under the bondage of Satan, and able to work out nothing but sin. In this state you are utterly helpless and miserable. "Your condition is such" (as our church in her tenth article expresses it) "that you cannot turn and prepare yourself (and much less attain) by your own natural strength to faith and calling upon God---the grace of Christ must go before to give you a good will, and then work with you when you have that good will." The first good motion of the will comes from Christ, even the desire to live unto God is his free gift, and every step is his work, until the life of God be perfected in the soul. He only, whose voice is to call the dead out of their graves, can call to the sinner, and be obeyed, "awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life." Christ, and Christ only, has life to give to the dead in sin. The fancied light of nature, the religion of nature, morality, learning,

learning, arts, and sciences, these with all other natural and acquired talents, can no more revive a dead sinner, than they can create a world. The conviction of this truth is absolutely necessary; for you can never apply to Christ for the free gift of his divine life, until you be perfectly convinced that you want it, and that you can do nothing to merit it. You can have no motive to apply to him, until you find your own helplessness, and therefore if you never saw your want of this divine life, intreat him to shew you your deadness in sin. Beg of him to open the eyes of your understanding, that you may be able to see in what a wretched dead state you have been all your days, and may be thereby stirred up to pray with strong crying and tears to the Prince of life, that he would raise you from the death of sin, unto a life of righteousness: for,

IV.

Jesus Christ came into the world to recover for sinners that life of happiness which they had forfeited.

THE scriptures are full of this truth from beginning to end. Jesus Christ is there set forth as the almighty Saviour and Redeemer, who *giveth life unto the world*. He was the eternal and self-existent God, equal in every perfection and attribute with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and he was pleased out of his infinite mercy and love

to be united to our nature, by which union, God and man became one Christ; so that he who obeyed the law, suffered, and died for us, was truly a divine and infinite person. By his obedience he atoned for our breach of the divine law; by his sufferings, he freed us from the punishment due to the breach of it; and he died that we might "live through him," 1 John iv. 9. a life of grace in this world, and a life of glory for ever in heaven, whereby what he said of himself might be fulfilled; "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," John x. 10.

This is the scripture account of the gracious method, by which our forfeited life was restored. It is the free gift of Jesus Christ, the lord of life and glory. He is the Lord God omnipotent, who created the heavens and the earth, and without whom was not any thing made that was made. He gave us our life at first. And when it was forfeited by sin, he came from heaven to redeem it; so that we owe him a double debt of gratitude. It was wonderful love, that he should create us at first out of nothing; but more wonderful, that he should come down from heaven to lay down his own life a ransom for ours. This love surpasseth all understanding. Men, who have never tasted it, can form no estimate of it; and they who have tasted it by faith, acknowledge it to be greater than

than heart can conceive, or tongue can utter. However, they know all that can be understood of it in the present world; for faith receives this spiritual life from Jesus Christ. Faith is that divine grace planted in the soul by the Holy Spirit, whereby it is vitally united to Jesus Christ, and receives support from him to begin, carry on, and perfect its spiritual life, and this brings me to prove that

V.

Faith receives from Jesus Christ the spiritual life, which he came to give unto the world.

FAITH, as a Christian grace, is widely different from an historical assent; for it does not only believe that Christ has life to give to a sinful world, but also receives it from him. This is essential to a true living faith, which is a vital uniting principle, and by which the believer is intimately joined to Christ, and draws supplies of nourishment from him, for the support of his spiritual life. The following scriptures prove it to be of the essence of true faith, to receive this life from Christ. "These are written, says St. " John xx. 31, that ye might believe that Jesus " is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believ- " ing ye might have life through his name. I " am the resurrection and the life, faith the " Lord:" John xi. 25, "He that believeth in me, " though he were dead, yet shall he live; and

“ whoever liveth and believeth in me, shall
“ never die ;” for he shall be as closely connected
with the root and stock of all spiritual life, as the
branches of the vine are with the root. “ I am
“ the vine,” saith the Lord of life, “ ye are the
“ branches ; as the branch cannot live, and
“ bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the
“ vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.”
By believing, we abide in him ; for faith is the
bond of this union. It engrafts us into Christ,
who is the root and stock of our spiritual life.
In him we live ; from him we receive nourish-
ment, and are enabled to bear much fruit to the
glory of God. This is the happy state of
Christians, who believe on the Son of God, and
have everlasting life ; but miserable beyond
conception is the state of them, who are not
united to him ; for he that believeth not the Son
shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth
on him, John iii. 36.

These scriptures clearly prove, that faith is the
hand, which God enables us to put forth, and by
which we lay hold of Christ, and life in him.
The blessed apostle Paul had happy experience
of this doctrine ; he relates it in these remarkable
words, Gal. ii. 20. “ I am crucified with Christ,
“ nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth
“ in me, and the life which I now live in the
“ flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God,
“ who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

In

In this passage we have full proof of all the former propositions ; as first, St. Paul was crucified and dead to sin with Christ, which plainly supposes him to have been alive to sin before ; and being thus crucified and dead, *nevertheless I live*, says he, a life of righteousness and holiness, but not by any power or virtue in myself. No, I could not make myself righteous or holy—*Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me* : he is the author of this life, and faith is that grace, by which we receive and enjoy it ; *the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me*. Oh ! happy Paul, who could without presumption say, the Son of God loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*. Reader, wouldst thou not give all the world to be able to say the same ? Thou wouldst. Why then, pray to God for the gift of faith, and when he gives it thee, it will make thee as happy as it did Paul. It will let thee know, that Christ also loves *thee*, and gave himself *for thy sins*. May the spirit of grace bestow upon thee the true living faith, that upon thine own experience thou mayest be able to repeat the words after the apostle, and say, “ I am crucified with
“ Christ, nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but
“ Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

VI.

In the sacrament, the body and blood of Christ, from which faith receives its spiritual life, are represented by bread and wine.

IT was the great end and design of the Christian revelation to discover to us, in what method the life, which we had forfeited, was to be restored. The knowledge of this is of the greatest moment. Our happy eternity depends upon it; and therefore God has been pleased to teach it us in the plainest manner. He has condescended to our capacities, and has made use of sensible objects to explain matters of faith. The soul does not see at present, but through the eyes of the body. Invisible and spiritual things must be brought down to our understandings by visible and material: and this is done in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. We know that our animal life cannot be sustained without proper nourishment, neither can our spiritual life; for God has been pleased to institute and appoint the meat and drink, which sustain the life of the body, to be the outward and visible signs of that spiritual meat and drink, which sustain the life of the soul. He has ordained bread and wine, to represent to the outward senses the spiritual support, which the soul receives from the body and blood of Christ. And in consequence of God's ordination.

VII.

VII.

It is as certain a truth, that the body and blood of Christ do support the life of grace in the soul, as that bread and wine do support life in the body.

MAN, as was before observed, in his present embodied state, does not see spiritual objects, but as they are compared with material. The revelation of God in the Old Testament and the New, is adapted to man in this state. Objects of faith are represented to him by objects of sense. Outward things are ordained to stand for inward; and God, who cannot lie, has instituted the outward sign, to give us evidence of the inward grace. He has instituted bread and wine, to represent the body and blood of Christ: and as bread is the staff of the life, it is therefore a just picture of the bread of life, which Christ brought down with him from heaven; and as wine maketh glad the heart of man, it is therefore a just picture of that most precious blood, which alone taketh away the sins of the world, and therefore which alone maketh glad the hearts of sinners. The bread and wine thus instituted, are signs to set before our senses what Christ's body and blood are to do to the soul; from whence arose the necessity of giving the same name to the sign as to the thing signified: because what the sign does to the body, the thing signified does to the soul. When Christ took up the bread, and said, *This is my body*, and the wine, and said, *This*

is my blood, he spake the language which the Old Testament had always used, and the only language which men could understand : for it was a received rule in the Old Testament to call the sign and the thing signified by the same name ; and it will always be a received rule, so long as men are confined to sense, and cannot see spiritual objects, but by their material types and instituted figures. You cannot see how the body and blood of Christ support the soul, but you see that bread and wine do support the body ; and the infallible God has engaged his word and truth to you, that there is as true and real support for your souls in the body and blood of Christ, as there is for your bodies in the bread and wine. He instituted the sign, to set before your eyes a picture, both of the life which Christ gave, as also of the manner in which he gave it : for his death was the purchase of your life. His body was so bruised, wounded, and smitten for your transgressions, that he says in the Psalms, *there was no whole part in it* ; therefore the sacramental bread is broken, and the wine is poured out, as his most precious blood was out of every pore and vein. I might trace the likeness in many more instances, but these may suffice to shew the propriety of instituting bread to represent the body of Christ, which is meat not figuratively or metaphorically, but in deed and in truth ; and wine to represent the blood of Christ,

Christ, which is drink indeed and in truth. Thus far the meaning of the sacrament, as to the outward and visible sign, and as to the inward and spiritual grace is plain enough. As a sign it is generally well understood, but then it is not merely a sign; it is something more: For

VIII.

The bread and wine are not only signs, that there is spiritual life in Christ, but also as under a seal they convey it.

THIS is the chief part of the sacrament, and I fear it is greatly mistaken. To set a seal to a writing or instrument, is making all that is contained in it authentic and valid. When a man sets a seal to an instrument he declares, this is my act and deed. So setting a seal to the elements is a legal conveyance of what they signify, and whosoever receives them under God's seal, he verily and indeed receives the body and blood of Christ, together with the spiritual life purchased by them. In this sense St. Paul certainly understood the Lord's supper; for he speaks of it 1 Cor. x. 16. not only as a sign, but also as a real seal. "The cup of blessing, which we
" bless, is it not the communion of" (or that which communicates to us) "the blood of Christ?" "The bread which we break is it not the com-
" munion of" (or that which communicates to us) "the body of Christ?" In the cup we com-
municate

communicate and partake of not the mere sign, but of the blood of Christ. In the bread we communicate and partake of not the mere sign, but of the body of Christ: and whoever thus communicates and partakes of the body and blood of Christ, to him the outward elements are a seal of that spiritual and divine life, which Christ's body broken, and his blood poured out, were the means of purchasing for a sinful world.

IX.

The bread and wine are signs to all receivers, but seals only to the faithful.

OUR church has determined this point in her 28th article, where it is said, that "the body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the supper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean, whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper, is faith." Faith is the means of our communicating of the elements in an heavenly and spiritual manner; and this faith is the gift of God. His good Spirit alone is able to apply to the hearts of the communicants, the divine support signified by the outward elements; and it is his office to make the application, and to give us an interest in all the promises of the gospel: for it is certain none but the Holy Spirit of promise can seal to us a spiritual blessing. His grace must be in the heart,

heart, convincing us of our want of spiritual life, and of the necessity of seeking it from Jesus Christ, before we can perceive any thing more in the elements than bread and wine; and he must have given us some knowledge of our interest in Christ, before faith can live and feed upon the body and blood of Christ under the outward elements. Sacramental communion is, no doubt, to communicate and partake of the body and blood of Christ. But who are able to communicate in this manner? None but believers, who have the eye of faith open to look through the signs to the things signified. And who enables them to communicate and partake of the things signified under the signs? The Spirit of God, who dwells in the hearts of believers; and who seals to them the promises of God made to them in this sacrament. The necessity of his application and sealing them was so evident to the primitive Christians, that at the consecration of the sacramental wine the priest used to mix water with it, which was as if he had declared in so many words — I believe the influence of the Holy Spirit to be necessary to apply to our souls the merits of Christ's blood, and therefore I pour in this water, which is the known emblem of the grace of the Holy Spirit, that no person may expect spiritual and divine life from the bare receiving of the outward elements: the Holy Spirit must be in his heart, in order to make it

it a spiritual service, and to render it the means of conveying spiritual blessings.

X.

The state of the doctrine from what has been said.

WE are all by nature dead in trespasses and sins. We forfeited and lost that life of happiness, which innocent man enjoyed, while he walked in the presence of God, and had sweet communion with him. And we can do nothing to recover this life of God in the soul; so that if he had left us to ourselves, we must have dragged on a miserable existence, until the mortal body should have fallen into the grave, and the soul should have perished for ever from God and glory. But thanks be to the ever blessed Trinity for contriving the gracious plan of our redemption. Thanks be to God the Father for sending the Son of his love to recover the spiritual and divine life, which we had forfeited and lost. Thanks be to the Holy Spirit, who enables us by the hand of faith to receive this spiritual and divine life. And thanks be to Jesus, the prince of life, who was pleased to institute bread and wine, to be signs to the bodily senses of his body and blood, and to be seals to the soul when applied by faith. This is the state of the doctrine; from whence it follows, that unless you eat of the flesh of Christ with faith, and drink his blood with faith, receiving verily and indeed
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under the signs the things signified, then Christ himself declares, *John vi. 53. that you have no life in you*——You have none of that life, which he came to give unto sinners, but you are as dead to God, and to the things of God, as a lifeless corpse is to the things of this world: for you are alienated from the life of God, and must be separated for ever, unless faith unite you to Jesus Christ, and give you life through him.

XI.

The application of the whole to three different sorts of persons, to them who have not the true living faith in Christ, to them who desire it, and to them who have it.

READER, this is the main point; and thou must bear with me, while I ask thee in the spirit of love, Whether thou hast received this true living faith? Hast thou an interest in Christ, and dost thou know it so clearly, that thou canst trust all thy concerns in time and in eternity with him? If thy soul be not in this happy state, then consider what danger thou art in. Thou art under the guilt of all thy sins; the holy, just, and good law of heaven has found thee guilty, and thou must suffer the deserved punishment in soul and body for ever. And when an almighty God comes to inflict this punishment on thee, wretched man, think, oh think, what will be then thy distress! Does the apprehension of it, while thou
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art reading this, give thee no uneasiness? That is an exceeding bad symptom; for then sin has destroy'd all motions of grace, and thou art quite dead in trespasses and sins.

What! may some of you say, can I, who am alive, and in good health, be in this dead state? Yes, you certainly may, and as you have no living faith, you are indeed in it: for this spiritual deadness is very consistent with all the offices of animal life. Nay, you may be a man of gaiety and pleasure, you may be seen at all public places, you may be the delight and admiration of the polite world, and yet you may be all the time dead to God, and the things of God; the more alive you are to the world, the more dead will you be to God. As the apostle says, "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth, 1 Tim. v. 6. A life of sensual pleasure is a spiritual death: so that you may be alive and cheerful, and in high spirits, and yet the immortal soul within you may be all the time dead to God. You may feed and indulge your dear body with good things, and your poor soul may be starving. And when this is the case, the more flourishing your outward condition is, the less will you perceive of your spiritual deadness, because you will go on the more smoothly and merrily, until God shall stop you by some sickness, or affliction, or shall call you by his word, and shall send his good Spirit with it to speak to your hearts,

"Awake

“Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life.” Oh! that he may awaken thee, reader, if thou art now in the dead sleep of sin, and may give thee faith to find life to thy soul in Jesus Christ.

But however, until God begin this work, you are not expected at the Lord's table. Until you be awakened, and see the deadness of your hearts to the things of God, you must eat and drink unworthily; for you do not desire that Christ's body and blood may support your spiritual life, as the bread and wine support animal life. Without this desire you *cannot discern the Lord's body*, you cannot discern any thing more in the elements, than in common bread and wine, and therefore if you partake of them, it must be upon some wrong motive, because you want the proper dispositions, namely, an humble sense of your want of spiritual life, and an earnest desire to receive it from Jesus Christ.

In hopes that God will send some of these considerations to your hearts with the effectual working of his grace, and stir up in you this good desire, I proceed to apply what has been said to them, who have already this desire. Reader is this thy case? Hast thou been deeply convinced of thy sinful and dead state by nature, and hast thou been led to seek life from the free grace of the Lord of life, and art thou now waiting for it in his appointed ways and means? If

this

this be thy state, thou art safe. Thou art invited, and thou wilt be a welcome guest at the Lord's table. Whoever is awakened, and finds his soul alienated from the life of God, and is hungering and thirsting for that spiritual life, which was purchased for him by the body and blood of Christ; he will attend upon this holy ordinance. Come, my brother, with full trust and confidence to this spiritual and heavenly feast. Lift up thine heart to God in prayer, and desire thou mayest find his presence in his own ordinance. Be encouraged from the experience of others, who went hungering and thirsting as thou dost, and he sent them away filled with good things. Oh! that their case may be thine, and soon, that thou mayest find grace to enable thee to live a life of holiness, to the glory of thy redeeming God. And to them who have received spiritual life from Christ, through faith, I make my last application.

My Christian brethren, I need not try to stir you up to a frequent attendance at the Lord's table. The many sweet and refreshing seasons, which you have enjoyed there, weigh more with you than a thousand arguments. Let me only remind you of the dignity of these holy mysteries. Here are the signs of Christ's body and blood, and the seals of the life which we receive from Christ's body and blood, in this world and in the next. The faithful now receive
with

with the elements that spiritual and divine life from Christ, which they are to receive from him in heaven: for here is *the bread which he brought down with him from heaven, and the hidden manna*, with which he has promised to feed them, that overcome, for ever and ever; and for these reasons faith sets an high value upon the instituted signs of spiritual life, because it receives under them the thing signified. Raise your devotion from this consideration. Go with humility to receive the signs and seals of your spiritual and divine life: and may the Lord Jesus be with you at his own table. May his good spirit prepare us all to communicate worthily, that we may spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink his blood; that we may dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; that we may be one with Christ, and Christ with us; and being thus united, may the body and blood of Jesus Christ preserve our bodies and souls unto everlasting life. So be it Lord Jesus. *Amen, and Amen.*

with the elements that spiritual and divine
the bread which they are to receive
their mind is broken: for here is the bread
which is broken down for us from heaven, and
the drink which is given which he has promised to
us. And thus we receive the heavenly bread and the
divine drink, and in this manner we are united
to Christ, and his blood and his flesh are
in us, and we are made one with him, and
we are made partakers of his life and his
eternal glory. And this is the purpose of
the sacrament, that we may be united to
Christ, and his blood and his flesh are
in us, and we are made one with him, and
we are made partakers of his life and his
eternal glory.

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and Christ with us, and his blood and his
flesh are in us, and we are made one with
him, and we are made partakers of his life
and his eternal glory.

And this is the purpose of the sacrament,

that we may be united to Christ, and his

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PREFACE

A
SEASONABLE ANTIDOTE

AGAINST

POPERY.

IN A

DIALOGUE

UPON

JUSTIFICATION.

BONA OPERA NON PRÆCEDUNT JUSTIFICANDUM, SED
SEQUUNTUR JUSTIFICATUM.

SEASONABLE ANTIDOTE

AGAINST

PYRY



JUSTIFICATION

THEY ARE THE ONLY JUSTIFICATION

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PREFACE.

THE papists have their emissaries every where, and they are vastly busy at present. They have more interest in this kingdom, and their doctrines have more advocates, than people imagine. Some of their pretended enemies are their best friends, and do them the greatest service. While they cry out, popery, popery, and would make men believe that they are no papists, they maintain the fundamental principles of the church of Rome. These were maintained openly in a little piece lately printed at Bristol, in defence of the popish doctrine of justification by works.

works. It was given out gratis, and made some noise. Reader, thou hast here a faithful copy of this choice performance: That the author of it might have no reason to complain of his meaning being misrepresented, his words tortured, his scope and design perverted, it was thought proper to give thee his words at full length. Here they are. Read and admire.

To the inhabitants of the parish of St. S—— in the city of Bristol, this little paper (drawn up with a view towards the prevention or removal of dangerous errors,—the taking away of the groundless presumptions of some,—The clearing up the unnecessary doubts and scruples of others,—but at the same time, towards exciting the serious attention of all, and keeping their consciences awake as to real duties) is most humbly addressed by their faithful pastor,

J———H T———R.

A short and familiar way of explaining the important doctrine of justification, and the points dependent on it, agreeably to scripture and the church of England.

Justification is a law term derived from judicial proceedings, and is opposed to condemnation. When applied to persons in this life, it anticipates the idea of a day of judgment, and declares the happy issue of a certain process supposed to be carried on in the court of conscience between God and the soul.

This being the case, when a person is brought to the bar, and acquitted by his judge, he is then said to be justified; That is, he is declared to be just or innocent in regard to the charge laid against him. But there is this circumstance in the Christian, wherein it differs from all other justifications, viz. That the justified person is not only acquitted but rewarded; and this reward is an eternal weight of glory.

Therefore take notice, That the first indictment brought against you in the court

court of conscience is,—That you have sinned, and thereby broke the law of God. And against this indictment you can make no defence, but must be infallibly cast, and condemned. For all the world are become guilty; all having sinned, and come short of the glory of God. But Christ's merits are here pleadable in arrest of judgment. For when you can make no defence of your own, and would otherwise be necessarily condemned, you can plead the merits of your saviour; and assert, That, as far as relates to the covenant of works, or the covenant of a never-failing obedience, you are freed from the curse and sentence attending the breach of it, by the mediation of Christ, and the imputation of his righteousness. You can assert also, That this mediation, and these merits have obtained for you a covenant of better hopes, one more gracious in its nature, being attended with the assistance of God's Holy Spirit, and upon all accounts more easy for you to perform, viz. The covenant of faith and repentance; to the performance of which a

free promise of immortal happiness is annexed.

The man is therefore brought to the bar a second time; and is then to be tried upon the terms of this new and better covenant, viz. Whether he has so co-operated with divine grace, and so improved his talent, as to have repentance and present obedience towards God, and faith and gratitude towards our Lord Jesus Christ.—If he has these qualifications, his plea is allowed of, his person accepted, and he is justified: So that were he to die that moment, he would be secure in the inheritance of eternal glory. But if he is found destitute of true faith and sincere repentance, his mouth is stopped, and he has no plea to make, nor apology to offer.—As to the sacrifice and satisfaction of Christ, his merits, his obedience, or imputed righteousness; the consideration of them will only serve to aggravate his guilt, and increase his punishment, instead of lessening them; because these things were never intended to supersede the necessity of repentance and a return to obedience, but,

but, on the contrary, to make this repentance and this return to duty become valid and acceptable in the sight of God; and to purchase for them that reward of immortal happiness, to which the most perfect obedience (supposing such an obedience possible) could have no right or claim, without the free promises of God in Christ.

To say more than this concerning the effects of Christ's imputed merits is blasphemous Antinomianism; which opens a door for all manner of sin and wickedness, by taking away the necessity of personal virtue and inherent holiness, and by making the imaginary transfer of Christ's righteousness to serve as a cloak for the unrighteousness of mankind.

To say less is Socianism (but one remove from modern deism) which destroys the idea of a Saviour and redeemer, and sinks the Christian covenant of grace and mercy into a mere system of moral duties.—

Between both these extremes lies that happy, gospel medium, which displays the mercy of God to the returning and
repenting

repenting sinner, and his justice on the impenitent and incorrigible.

Hence therefore a rational and scriptural evidence of your justification; hence a genuine and authentic proof of your being a new creature; and the proper, never-failing credential, that the spirit of God dwelleth in you: For, if you have true faith and sincere repentance, you want no other signs or evidences. But if you have not these,—To pretend to any other assurances, tokens, feelings, or experiences, is vain and delusive.

Hear therefore the judicious decision of our excellent church, as the conclusion of the whole matter,---“ Oh, but
 “ how shall I know that the Holy Ghost
 “ is within me? Some man perchance
 “ will say:---Forsooth, as the tree is
 “ known by his fruit, so is also the Holy
 “ Ghost. The fruits of the Holy Ghost
 “ (according to the mind of St. Paul)
 “ are these, love, joy, peace, long-suf-
 “ fering, gentleness, goodness, faithful-
 “ ness, meekness, temperance, &c. Con-
 “ trariwise, the deeds of the flesh are
 “ these, adultery, fornication, unclean-
 “ ness,

" nefs, wantonness, idolatry, witchcraft,
 " hatred, debate, emulation, wrath, con-
 " tention, sedition, heresy, envy, mur-
 " der, drunkenness, gluttony, and such
 " like.—☞ Here is now that glass,
 " wherein thou must behold thyself, and
 " discern, whether thou have the Holy
 " Ghost within thee, or the spirit of the
 " flesh. If thou see, that thy works be
 " virtuous and good, consonant to the
 " prescript rule of God's Word, favour-
 " ing and tasting not of the flesh, but
 " of the spirit; then assure thyself, that
 " thou art endued with the Holy Ghost :
 " Otherwise in thinking well of thyself,
 " thou dost nothing else but deceive thy-
 " self." (The first part of the Hom. on
 Whitsunday.)

*This is the extraordinary piece, which
 gave occasion to the following dialogue.*

DIALOGUE

CONCERNING

JUSTIFICATION.

Believer. **H**OW do you do, my dear Sir? You are welcome to town. How did you leave all friends at Bristol?

Enquirer. Sir, I thank you. I left them all well.

Bel. Pray, do you bring us any good news from thence?

Enq. We have nothing very particular at present, except that religion is more talked of than any other topic, and we have had some stir about a little piece printed by our minister upon Justification.

Bel. I suppose you mean "The short and familiar way of explaining the important Doctrine of Justification," which you sent me up?

Enq.

Enq. Yes. That is it, and have you read it carefully, as I desired you?

Bel. Yes, Sir, at your request I have read it over several times.

Enq. And what is your opinion of it?

Bel. It is indeed short, but far from being familiar, and instead of explaining from scripture this important doctrine, he leaves scripture quite out of the question, leaves the church of England, and all the Protestant churches, and chooses to go to the church of Rome for his account of justification.

Enq. Although this be a very heavy charge against my Dr. yet I dare say you would not lay it, unless you could make it good.

Bel. You know that my charge is not against the man, but against his tenets: For I never saw Dr. T. in my life.

Enq. True! But are you not too sharp and severe in supposing him to be a Papist? I know the man, and he cries out against popery as much as you can do.

Bel. Does he indeed? Then I am sure he does not know what popery is; for he is an open defender of its fundamental doctrine.

Enq. How do you prove that?

Bel. Why! From this very paper of his. He here maintains justification by works, which is the grand heresy of the Papists, and from which their most dangerous errors are derived, and he denies that justification is by faith only, which
all

all sound Protestants maintain, and therefore he cannot be a Protestant.

All Protestants hold justification to be by faith only, but Dr. T. holds justification to be by works, therefore he is not a Protestant.

And he must be a Papist, because the grand heresy of popery consists in holding justification to be by works, and Dr. T. holds justification to be by works, therefore he is in the grand heresy of popery?

Enq. But from whence does it appear, that Dr. T. holds justification by works?

Bel. It appears from the general scope and design of this little tract, in which he sets out at first tolerably well, and until he comes near the end of his third paragraph there is something like the truth, but he begins to lose sight of it, when he talks "of Christ's having obtained
" for us a covenant of better hopes, and that
" faith and repentance are the terms of this
" covenant."

Enq. And are they not?

Bel. No. The scripture considers faith and repentance as the privileges and free-gifts of the covenant of grace, which the Dr. mistakes for terms and conditions. And this mistake runs throughout. He all along supposes the graces of the covenant to be the terms, and its free gifts and privileges the conditions of it; which is downright popery.

Enq. Do you take the gospel then to be a revelation of grace and mercy, and not a proposal of a covenant of terms and conditions?

Bel. I take the gospel to be glad tidings of salvation for poor sinners, informing them what Christ hath done for their salvation, and how by the obedience of his life, and by the sacrifice of his death, he made a full atonement for sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness; and shewing how the free grace of God applies to them the benefits of Christ's atonement and righteousness, namely, by the Holy Spirit's working in them repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. By the gift of repentance they are turned unto God, and under a sense of their fallen, sinful and miserable state, as transgressors of his holy and righteous law, each of them is constrained to cry out, "God be merciful unto me a sinner." And to alleviate their distress and to bring peace and comfort to their souls, they are enabled by faith, which is also the gift of the Holy Spirit, to trust in, and to plead the righteousness of Christ only, who is of God made unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. And hereby the Believer is entitled to immortal happiness, on account of what Christ hath done for him, the comfort of which he enjoys by what the Holy Spirit hath wrought in him, viz. a believing apprehension and conviction that he has an interest

terest in the righteousness of the God-man. This is I think the true gospel of Jesus Christ, which is evidently no covenant of faith and repentance, but a revelation of grace and mercy, and in which we have the free promises of eternal life, but not annexed to the performance of faith and repentance, as works of man, or the terms or conditions of the covenant, but to Jesus Christ, and to the perfect obedience, and full satisfaction he hath made for sin: For the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Enq. I see how widely different your view of the gospel is from the Dr.'s. He absolutely insists upon there being some terms or conditions of justification: Whereas, if I understand you right, there are none.

Bel. The gospel has mentioned none. "Do this and thou shalt live" is the language of the law: Here life is promised upon the terms of obedience. Whereas in the gospel, life is purchased for us by Christ, and also all the gospel promises are freely made through him, and all the gospel graces are freely given through him, not to be received upon the performance of any previous terms or works, but freely given by the mere grace of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And the Dr. strangely errs, not knowing the scriptures, when he talks of faith and repentance as terms: For I suppose he means by terms, the

conditions upon the performance of which we are justified: But that which is promised as a free-gift cannot be received upon the performance of any terms or conditions; and Justification itself, as well as faith and repentance, are promised in scripture as free-gifts, consequently they are not to be received upon the performance of any terms or conditions.

You may read Rom. v. 16, 18. that justification is the free-gift of God. So is Faith, Eph. ii. 8. It is the gift of God, wrought in the heart by his operation, and one of the fruits of his good Spirit. So likewise is repentance, Acts v. 31. God hath exalted Jesus with his right hand, to be a prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance. Now since faith and repentance are the free-gifts of God, how can they be the terms or conditions of our justification? How can they be conditions to qualify us to receive what God gives freely, and according to the pleasure of his own will? Can you reconcile this difficulty? How can God give that freely, which he does not give but upon certain terms or conditions?

Enq. But is it not a very common expression among divines, the terms of acceptance? I think I have seen a celebrated book with that title.

Bel. You will neither find the expression nor the doctrine in scripture, but in direct opposition to both, the scripture says, "We are accepted

“in the beloved,” and again, “we are justified freely by grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” Here we are said to be accepted in Christ without any terms or conditions of our own fulfilling. And is it not a palpable contradiction, to say that we are justified freely by grace, and yet at the same time upon certain terms or conditions?

Enq. But are there no terms of acceptance?

Bel. You hear what the scripture says, “We are accepted in the beloved.”

Enq. What! without any terms?

Bel. Yes, without any terms to be previously performed by us to qualify us for Acceptance.

Enq. But how then am I to understand the Dr. for he says, “the man is therefore brought to the bar a second time, and is then to be tried upon the terms of this new and better covenant, viz. whether he has so co-operated with divine grace, and so improved his talent, as to have repentance and present obedience towards God, and faith and gratitude towards our Lord Jesus Christ.—If he has these qualifications, his plea is allowed of, his person accepted, and he is justified.” What am I to think of these words?

Bel. You are to think that they contain the grand heresy of the Papists, and they state it as clearly as any Dr. of the Sorbonne could have done. For

First, Here we have a man brought to the bar.

Second, His trial is put upon this issue—Has he so co-operated with divine grace, and so improved his talent, as to have repentance and faith, present obedience and gratitude?

Third, If he has these qualifications, and good works, then he is justified, but

Fourth, As the Dr. adds, “if he is found
“ destitute of true faith and sincere repentance,
“ his mouth is stopped, and he has no plea to
“ make, nor apology to offer:” From whence it follows,

Fifth, That no man is justified without these qualifications and good works, they must go before his justification. All this is downright popery. It is contrary to the whole tenor of scripture, contrary to the doctrines of the church of England, and contrary to the Dr.’s own oaths and subscriptions.

Eng. Not so fast, my dear friend. You charge too high. I see indeed, that the Dr. does require these qualifications beforehand, as previously necessary to justification, but how do you prove this to be unscriptural?

Bel. I might prove it from the general scope and design of the sacred volume, which is to direct sinners to the righteousness of the God-man Christ Jesus for justification, but I refer you to the Epistles to the Romans, and to the Gala-

tians, which were written to establish this truth, that "a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ," Gal. ii. 16. which excludes all qualifications and works. Rom. iii. 24. God declares, "we are justified freely by his grace, and if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace."

Again, we read Rom. iv. 5. "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Observe how widely St. Paul differs from Dr. T.

Dr. T. says a man is not justified without certain works and qualifications:

St. Paul says, "he is justified that worketh not."

Dr. T. teaches that a man is not justified, unless he first have faith and obedience:

St. Paul asserts, that God justifieth the ungodly. What faith and obedience has an ungodly person?

St. Paul sends sinners to Christ for righteousness, that they may be made the righteousness of God in him; but

Dr. T. sends them to their own qualifications and works, without which they cannot be made the righteousness of God in Christ.

Moreover St. Paul says, Rom. iv. 6. "God imputeth righteousness without works."

Dr.

Dr. T. denies it, and maintains, that God imputeth not righteousness unless there be works and qualifications going before. Now what do you think of these scriptures? Do they not entirely overthrow Dr. T's notion of justification?

Eng. Indeed they appear to me in a stronger light, than ever I saw them in before; but what do you think of the person, who is tried and cast for want of qualifications?

Bel. I suppose you refer to this passage, "But if he is found destitute of true faith and sincere repentance his mouth is stopped, and he has no plea to make, nor apology to offer." How widely different is this from the scripture state of the case, which represents the persons who are to be justified freely, as "ungodly, as working not, as found to be sinners while they are seeking to be justified." Whereas Dr. T. makes them saints, before they are justified. They have repentance, obedience, faith, and Gratitude, and upon pleading these qualifications they are pronounced to be righteous in themselves, and are justified. How opposite is this to the scripture doctrine, which teaches us that we unrighteous sinners are made the righteousness of God in Christ; but how exactly agreeable is it to the sentiments of the Papists?

Eng. You are still harping upon that string. I tell you again, that Dr. T. is a bitter enemy to popery,

popery, and a sound friend to the church of England.

Bel. He may call himself so, but he and the church of England are as wide as the East is from the West. Her doctrine is founded upon an old maxim, namely, That good works do not go before in the person who is to be justified, but follow the person being justified. *Bona opera non pracedunt justificandum, sed sequuntur justificatum.* Dr. T. makes them go before, and thereby forgets what he once set his hand to, viz. the 13th Article, the title of which is this—"Of Works before Justification." "Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or as the school authors say, deserve grace of congruity; yea, rather for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin."

Compare Dr. T's paper with this article, and you will see that they are diametrically opposite. The article says—Works done before justification, have in them the nature of sin, the Dr. once set his hand to this doctrine, but now he writes against it, and says, that they have in them the nature of merit, for they are qualifications indispensably necessary to justification. Let a whole college

college of Jesuits reconcile these contradictions if they can.

Eng. Truly I cannot see how they can be reconciled. But have good works no place in our justification?

Bel. No, none at all; for works done before justification, all Dr. T's qualifications have in them the nature of sin, according to our church,

Eng. How am I to understand this doctrine?

Bel. Hear what our church says of it in the second part of the Homily on Salvation. "The
 " true understanding of this doctrine, we be justified freely by faith without works, is not,
 " that this our own act to believe in Christ, or
 " this our faith in Christ, which is within us doth
 " justify us, and deserve our justification unto us
 " (for that were to count ourselves to be justified
 " by some act or virtue that is within ourselves)
 " but the true understanding and meaning thereof is, that although we hear God's word, and
 " believe it, although we have faith, hope,
 " charity, repentance, dread and fear of God
 " within us, and do never so many works thereunto: Yet we must renounce the merit of all
 " our said virtues, of faith, hope, charity, and
 " all other virtues and good deeds, which we
 " either have done, shall do, or can do, as things
 " that be far too weak, and insufficient and imperfect, to deserve remission of our sins, and
 " our justification." Is not the meaning of these words

words very plain and clear, and what can the Dr. object to them? If he denies their authority, what becomes of his oaths and subscriptions? If he allows of it, how can he insist upon faith, repentance, &c. as qualifications requisite to our justification, after the church has absolutely excluded faith and repentance by name, and all other virtues and good deeds from deserving any part of our justification? How does this reasoning appear to you?

Enq. Why! really, it is decisive! I did not think you could have brought such convincing proofs, but I am now satisfied that our justification is not from any works which we have done, can do, or shall do; yet there is a difficulty still sticks with me.

Bel. Pray what is it?

Enq. It is this. Does not your doctrine of justification supercede the necessity of repentance and return to obedience, as the Dr. expresses himself?

Bel. Don't call it my doctrine. It is the doctrine of scripture, and of the church of England: For you know we are taught, that Christ was exalted to be a prince and a saviour for to give faith and repentance, even that faith which worketh by love; and how then can this doctrine supercede the necessity of faith, repentance, and return to duty, since Christ always gives these Graces to those persons whom he justifies?

NOY

Enq.

Eng. But certainly this doctrine does supercede the necessity of repentance and return to duty.

Bel. No, far from it. It only supercedes them as qualifications for our being justified; For the scripture and our church allow of no qualifications or conditions. And the Dr. without intending it, has fallen into their opinion; for in direct contradiction to what he had been maintaining, he says, "That the imputed righteousness of Christ, was to make repentance and this return to duty, become valid and acceptable in the sight of God;" from whence I argue upon his principles, that without this imputed righteousness they would not be valid nor acceptable, and if not valid nor acceptable, how could they be necessary qualifications for our justification? How could that make us accepted, which was itself not acceptable? So that here we have J——h against T——r boldly contradicting him to his face.

Eng. Surely you must misrepresent the Doctor.

Bel. No, my good friend, I do not. Look at the paper. See, here are the very words. Read them over.

Eng. Well, I protest, I could not have thought Dr. T. would have contradicted himself in such a palpable manner. I'm sorry for him.

Bel. Sorry! Ay so you ought. If you are sorry for his false reasoning, how sincerely sorry should you

you be for his false doctrine? For the scripture teaches, that our persons are justified, and the church asserts that we are accounted righteous, through the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But Dr. T. assigns the obedience, sacrifice, satisfaction, and imputed righteousness of Christ, no other place than to make our works valid and acceptable, and to purchase for THEM—(what! for righteousness and return to duty? Yes, for I find no other case to agree) the reward of immortal happiness. I could never find in scripture, that all that Christ did and suffered, was to make our repentance, and return to duty, valid and acceptable in the sight of God, or that he came into the world to purchase the reward of immortal happiness for repentance and return to duty; but I read often of his giving himself for sinners, of his dying to atone for sin, and of his purchasing eternal life for them that were dead in trespasses and sins. Can you reconcile this with the Dr.'s notion of Christ's righteousness making our obedience and return to duty valid and acceptable?

Enq. No, indeed, I cannot, and am sorry the Dr. should maintain things so absurd and unscriptural.

Bel. I am glad you are already sorry for him, you will have more reason, when I come to his next paragraph. There he affirms—"that to say more than this concerning the effects of Christ's

“ Christ’s imputed merits ; to say more than that
 “ our good works qualify us to receive Christ’s im-
 “ puted merits is, he says, blasphemous Anti-
 “ nomianism.” But the scripture and our church
 say more, therefore the Dr. calls the scripture,
 and our church, blasphemous Antinomians, and
 he says their doctrine “ opens a door for all
 “ manner of sin and wickedness, by taking away
 “ the necessity of personal virtue and inherent
 “ holiness.” The scripture abhors the Dr.’s
 charge, What ! shall we make Christ the minister
 of sin ? God forbid. Our church enters her
 protest in the 3d part of the Homily on Salva-
 tion, in these words : “ How can a man have
 “ the true faith, sure trust and confidence in
 “ God, that by the merits of Christ his sins be
 “ forgiven, and be reconciled to the favour of
 “ God, and to be partaker of the kingdom of
 “ heaven by Christ, when he liveth ungodly, and
 “ denieth Christ in his deeds ?” And as to these
 unscriptural terms, personal virtue and inherent
 holiness, they are brought in to be a kind of
 contrast to the righteousness of Christ, and to
 throw contempt upon it. You know my opinion
 of Christ’s righteousness, and you can imagine
 how sensibly I must have been affected at the
 reading of the next words. I declare my blood
 run cold, and I even now shudder at the repeat-
 ing them—Lord grant they may never be laid to
 the Dr.’s charge—“ And by making the imagi-
 “ nary

“nary transfer of Christ’s righteousness to serve
“as a cloak for the unrighteousness of man-
“kind.”

Enq. My dear Sir, what offends you herein so mightily? What necessity for this great outcry?

Bel. Don’t you see the reason? Is not that righteousness here trampled under foot as a mean and vile thing, in which the Lord’s people here below, and above, appear before him without spot of sin unto salvation? For

First, It is here asserted, that to say a man is justified by Christ’s righteousness without works, is destroying personal virtue and inherent holiness.

Secondly, That the transfer of his righteousness serves as a cloak for the unrighteousness of mankind, and

Thirdly, That the imputed righteousness of Christ, which the Dr. treated before as a real thing, he now treats as an imaginary thing.

Enq. Does he indeed? What does he call Christ’s imputed righteousness imaginary?

Bel. Yes, he does not mince the matter, but treats it as a fable; the righteousness of God he treats as a mere imagination. He once indeed thought it a real thing, and set his hand to the truth of it, and he still acts in the ministry in consequence of his subscription to the thirty-nine

nine articles, although he now writes against the
 11th, "Upon the Justification of man," which
 says—"We are accounted righteous before God
ONLY, for the merit of our Lord and Saviour
 Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works
 or deservings." What do you think of this
 article? Does it not say more than the Dr. does?
 And is it then blasphemous Antinomianism? Is
 it opening a door to all manner of sin and wick-
 edness, to say that we are accounted righteous
ONLY through Christ's imputed righteousness?
 Answer me, my friend.

Enq. Indeed this article has struck me. That
 word **ONLY** is an answer to all the Dr.'s paper.
 I now see clearly the Dr. is in the wrong, and I
 thank you heartily for convincing me of it. I
 understand how free and full the righteousness of
 Christ is, and that it is imputed to the ungodly,
 who have no qualifications, no good works, no
 personal virtue, nor inherent holiness. And I
 pray God, I may be found in Christ not having
 my own righteousness, which is of the law, but
 that which is through the faith of Christ, the
 righteousness which is of God by faith.

Bel. I have reason to be thankful if my dis-
 course has been of any use to you. I have
 spoken freely, and more so, as I know not the
 Dr. and cannot be supposed to have any dislike
 to him. If ever you should bring him into my
 company, I would speak more freely to him,
 than

than I have of him; both for the sake of his own soul, and of their souls who are committed to his care. I doubt not but I could convince him, that his general inference, which begins thus, "hence therefore, a rational and scriptural evidence of your justification, is neither rational nor scriptural. If you have true faith and sincere repentance, you want no other signs or evidences, says he, of your justification." Observe, this faith and this repentance are to go before as qualifications for our being justified, and considered in this respect, our church says, they have in them the nature of sin; and therefore they are no signs or evidences at all. "But if you have not these" (as the Dr. adds) "to pretend to any other assurances, tokens, feelings, or experiences, is vain and delusive." Does he know any one who maintains, that a man may be in a state of justification, and yet have no faith or repentance? I do not hear of any person who maintains this; but I know some who talk of certain marks and evidences attending true faith, which the scripture has promised, and these must not be discarded as vain or delusive: For the scripture has promised us the assurance of faith, as the gift of God, and to be wrought in us by the operation of God, and mentions the earnest or token of the Spirit, and speaks of feeling after the Lord and finding him, yea, feeling in ourselves the working of the spirit

of Christ, as our church expresses it in article 17. and in another place, feeling our consciences at peace with God through remission of our sin (third part of the Homily for Rogation Week) and feeling this with so much certainty, that we can tell our experience with David—"Come hither, and hearken, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul." So that we must not reject all tokens, feelings, and experiences, as vain and delusive.

Enq. Doubtless there is such a thing as the assurance of faith, and I pray God I may attain it.

Bel. God grant you may. And now let me ask you—Does it not appear to you upon the whole, that the Dr. was greatly mistaken even in the very title of his paper? for he has been establishing groundless presumptions instead of taking them away, giving farther handle to unscriptural doubts and fears, instead of clearing them up, and lulling consciences asleep upon the sandy foundation of human righteousness, instead of building upon Christ the rock of ages for righteousness to justification, and for true holiness of heart and life. His notions are opposite to scripture, and inconsistent with the determinations of the church of England, and therefore they come under one of the marks of the fruits of the flesh enumerated by St. Paul, and quoted by

by the Dr. from the Homily--namely HERESY.
Are these things so?

Enq. Indeed they appear to me with such full conviction, that I need not trouble you about the last part of his paper: For I now see plain enough, that his quotation from the Homily is nothing to the purpose, because it only says, that when the Spirit of Christ is within a man, he will bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, but the Homily does not maintain with the Dr. that these fruits will justify us.

Bel. No, far from it. The doctrine of the Homilies is this:

The righteousness for which a sinner is accounted righteous before God, is the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

It was not the end of Christ's fulfilling all righteousness to make repentance and return to duty valid and acceptable, nor yet to purchase for repentance and return to duty the reward of eternal happiness; but he fulfilled all righteousness, that our persons might first be made righteous, after which our works would be acceptable. And Accordingly we never read of his righteousness being imputed to them who have repented and returned to duty, but it is said to be imputed to the ungodly, to him that worketh not, without any qualifications or conditions.

VOL. II. D d Faith

Faith is the hand which apprehends, or the instrument which applies Christ's imputed righteousness, and thereby justifies.

This justifying faith is the gift of the Holy Spirit.

He gives us evidence of our being justified, by bearing his testimony with our Spirits, that we are the children of God, and

By enabling us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.

These fruits do not justify us, but prove us to be justified, as the fruits upon a tree don't make it alive, but prove it to be alive.

Eng. I heartily assent to these truths, and I desire to experience the comfort of them in my own soul.

Bel. I am glad to leave you in this sweet frame of mind. I wish all our Bristol friends were in your way of thinking.

Eng. I promise you, it will not be my fault, if they be not. I will do my endeavour to convince them.

Bel. I hope God will prosper your endeavours, and give his blessing to your magistrates and people; may they love Christ and his righteousness; may your clergy, and Dr. T. among the rest, preach Christ, and teach men to submit to his righteousness; and may Christ pour his choicest blessings upon the City of Bristol, that it may be celebrated through the earth, for the City of righteousness, the faithful City.

AN EARNEST
INVITATION

TO THE
FRIENDS OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH,
TO JOIN,

With several of their Brethren, Clergy and Laity, in London,

IN SETTING APART

ONE HOUR OF EVERY WEEK,
FOR PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION, DURING THE PRESENT
TROUBLESOME TIMES.

Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt
glorify me. Psalm l. 15.

TO THE
FRIENDS OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH
IN LONDON

INVITATION

TO THE

FRIENDS OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH

IN LONDON

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TO THE

FRIENDS OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH

IN LONDON



PREFACE.

1. IN the beginning of the last war providence seemed to take part with our enemies. We wanted unanimity in our public councils, and success in our public measures. One miscarriage followed another. Our national courage ceased to exert itself, and a general dejection of spirits ensued. At this time several clergymen of the established church agreed to meet at the throne of grace on the Lord's-day. The subject of their joint prayers was to ask the blessing of God upon our public councils, our fleets, and our armies. They were soon joined by a great number of the laity in most parts

of the kingdom. Afterwards several praying societies were formed for the very same purpose in Germany, and especially in Hanover. In the spirit of prayer and supplication they humbled themselves before the Lord: they sought success at his hands, and he was gracious to their requests; he sent victory after victory, until our enemies were willing to be at peace, and then they gave him unfeigned thanks, and ascribed all the glory to his goodness and power.

2. The principles upon which they then acted were these. They believed in the being of God, the Lord and Maker of all worlds. They acknowledged his providence over his works; for he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. His kingdom ruleth over all, every person and every thing; And none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

3. They believed also, that in the course of his providence, he acts by an infinitely wise rule, which he has made known to us
in

in the holy scriptures. He is the Almighty Creator, and sovereign Lord of mankind, and he has given them a law, which is holy, just, and good. Every tittle of it is not only for his glory, but also for their profit. He has secured obedience to it by promises and threatenings, neither of which can fail. His word cannot be broken, either to the obedient or disobedient. According to his revealed will his love infallibly follows the one, and his justice the other.

4. This is true of societies, as well as of private persons. Sin is alike the transgression of the law, and deserves in many or in few the threatened punishment; but according to the number, it becomes more poisonous: because it spreads its infection by example. When the multitude agree to do evil, the restraint of shame is taken off. If the times should favor them through much luxury, and great licentiousness, they harden one another in sin. Then general dissipation and false pleasure take possession of the heart. These hinder the mind from being cultivated with any profitable knowledge.

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The sound principles of religion become neglected, and as these grow out of fashion, immoral practices must prevail.

The authority of God is cast off: his word, his sabbaths, his ordinances, are first diffused, and then by degrees despised. Thus infidelity gets deeper root, and immorality, which is its natural fruit, become luxuriant. The restraint of the divine law being taken away, human laws lose their force upon the conscience: for when the fear of God is gone, there is no motive left sufficient to influence the heart or conduct; men will then venture to sin without any sense of danger, even of death itself. And when national sin is come to this height, God has declared in his word, and by the constant course of his providence has made it manifest, that he will interpose to maintain the honour of his law and government. When men have thus deeply corrupted themselves, he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins: "Shall I not visit for these things, saith the lord, shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

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5. When God arises to vindicate his authority, he is never at a loss for means. All creatures are ready to execute his judgments, which are the more fearful, because in his hands, irresistible. Among them war is one of the most severe and desolating: it is one of the fore visitations of God, as Ezek. xiv. 21. which does not come by chance, but by his command: and he sends it, Amos ix. 4. to plead his controversy. It is the just appointment of his providence to vindicate his broken law, and his despised government. It is his wise interposition, either to correct for those things, or to destroy. When it is the loving rod of correction, it humbles: it brings the sinner upon his knees; he repents, he turns from the error of his ways, and is reformed by the visitation. When it comes to punish, he gives warning before the blow; but the people sin on, they fear not the sword, nor him who sent it: then it vindicates the righteous quarrel of the Lord upon impenitent sinners. It strikes at every thing truly valuable, liberty, property, yea life itself. This scourge is
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now sent, and felt; sent by the divine providence, and felt, yea sorely complained of, but not as it should be; not with submission to the justice of the visitation, but with murmuring; not with turning from sin, but with returning to it with more hardness and greater greediness.

6. This was our situation when we entered upon the war in 1756. Considering ourselves as Christian ministers, we saw our duty, and what part it became us to act, as good citizens. We had read the promises of God made to those, who at such times seek his help, and implore his blessing. We had seen those promises fulfilled: we in earnest pursued the means of his own appointing, and we met with the desired end: he humbled us at his footstool; we asked pardon for our national departure from the living God; we implored his mercy through Christ; and he heard prayer, he answered prayer, and we glorified him.

7. The use of the same means is now again recommended; (Dec. 1778,) the same

same occasion calls for it, and we have the same encouragement. The promises, and the examples in scripture, warrant us to expect the same success. May the spirit of grace and supplication be poured out abundantly upon ministers, and people, that multitudes may use the means, until God send us a blessed issue: yea, may he turn to us in mercy, and turn us as a people unto himself, with repentance and faith. The cloud may be dark which hangs over our heads; it may threaten a destroying storm; it may spread blacker, and look more dreadful: yet prayer can pierce through the cloud; the prayer of faith can gain admittance into his presence, who has his way in the whirlwind, and who presides over the storm. The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous was heard; the cloud was dispersed, and the face of the heavens again serene and peaceful. O for another army of such supplicants! What cannot they do! calling for, and trusting to, the help of the Almighty? This is our spiritual armour, and more useful than the arm of flesh:
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may as many use the one, as use the other. And now the host is gone forth against the enemy, may we at home follow them and aid them with our prayers, never ceasing, until God restore peace to the earth, and good will between us and all our public enemies.

The following little tract was made very useful in all the former wars from the year 1756, and has gone through a great number of editions. I have been called upon by some persons, on whose judgment I depend, to reprint it; in hopes the same blessing may attend it. How greatly is it to be wished, that it may stir up thousands to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, and to seek his help in this time of need. If we do it in earnest, we need not despair. The same means will bring about the same end. May we use the means, and pray on, till God shall hear and answer.

W. R.

AN EARNEST INVITATION.

EARNEST INVITATION,

&c. &c.

MY CHRISTIAN BROTHER,

GOD has declared, that when a land sins against him by trespassing grievously, then he will stretch out his hand upon it, and visit it with his four sore judgments, the sword, the famine, the noisome beast, and the pestilence. These he sends to punish the land for its grievous trespasses; He has visited us with some of his sore judgments, and therefore our land has trespassed grievously. And if we continue to provoke him, and refuse to receive correction, he will continue these punishments; and it is to be feared, if we remain hardened and impenitent under them, he will at last give us over to the destroyer.

The present circumstances of our public affairs are exceedingly awful and alarming. Our danger is confessedly great. Our enemies are many and

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mighty, and our numerous sins are in their interest. Every sin helps them to destroy us; and God has been thus far on our enemies side. He has been by them punishing our sins, and yet with a strange infatuation we sin on securely, as if we did not apprehend, that continuance in sin would certainly cause the continuance of our calamities. And dreadful it is to see how ineffectual all the former judgments have been to reform us. Still our people refuse to deny themselves their diversions and their vices. And the season of the year is come, when without any reformation at home, we are going to send out our fleets and armies against our enemies abroad, vainly flattering ourselves with hopes of success, while our sins set God at defiance, and make him continue to fight against us with his almighty power.

If then our people have not been reclaimed by past judgments, and consequently greater must be expected. What is to be done? What can true believers do, but use their interest with God in prayer? We have no other expedient left. If our people won't plead with God for themselves, let us plead for them. Our encouragement is great; we have many sweet promises in scripture to rely upon. There is one in Solomon's prayer, which suits our case exactly (2 Chron, vi. 24, 25), "And if thy people *Israel* be put to the worse before the enemy, because
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they have sinned against thee, and shall return and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication before thee in this house, then hear thou from the heavens, and forgive the sins of thy people." There never was an instance wherein God acted contrary to the method here mentioned. Whenever a people turned to him and confessed their sins, he turned away from his fierce anger. If they called upon him in the day of trouble, he heard and answered. If they put their trust in him, he maintained their cause.

Several ministers of the established church from the consideration of our danger, and seeing no remedy more effectual than prayer and supplication, have resolved to spend part of every Lord's Day in this holy exercise. They have chosen this day, partly for the sake of the day itself, being a day sacred to religion, and because they wanted to have the joint prayers of those persons, who might be hindered on other days, but who were now entirely free from worldly avocations: and they have chosen to spend from eight to nine o'clock in the evening, because it is the time that could be best spared from the duties of the day, and because after attending upon public worship, the mind would be better disposed for private worship—prayer, and the word, and the sacraments, having put the soul into a proper frame to humble itself before God, first for its own sins, and then for the sins of the nation.

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We earnestly request our brethren of the established church, and all our fellow Christians to join with us in this religious design. It is a seasonable, and a pious request that we make: and we hope no person, who has the spirit of prayer, and who is a lover of the protestant religion, and of our establishment, will be prevented by any slothful or needless excuse, from offering up his petitions along with ours at the appointed hour; but that all the faithful servants of God in every part of the land will be at the same time, as one congregation, presenting their prayers before the throne of grace. Oh how much to be desired, how good and joyful a thing would it be, to see brethren thus praying together in unity. May God put it into the hearts both of ministers and people thus to pray in sweet agreement, at one time, and with one heart, until God hear and answer, and deliver this church and kingdom out of their dangers and troubles.

The first part of the duty, which is incumbent upon us at this time, consists in humbling ourselves before God, under a deep sense of those sins which have provoked him to send down so many heavy judgments upon our land, in confessing those sins with a godly sorrow, and in turning from them with a repentance not to be repented of. And that we may all be stirred up to a due discharge of this duty, we should be fully persuaded that our public calamities come

from our sins. God is angry at nothing but sin. Every man therefore should look into his own heart, and see what great reason God has to be angry with him, and accordingly to humble himself under the mighty hand of God, that he may pardon him and exalt him in due time.

Let each of us then at the appointed hour retire from the world, and in the presence, and before the footstool of the sovereign Creator and Redeemer, examine what grounds and reasons we have for deep humiliation. And

FIRST, We have great reason to mourn and be afflicted before him for the sinfulness of our nature, which is the fruitful parent of all our actual sins. We have corrupted ourselves in every faculty of soul and body; and the sight and feeling of this corruption should give us the most humbling views of our sinful, lost, and helpless condition: for by this fault and corruption of nature, every man naturally engendered of the offspring of *Adam* is not only far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit, but also deserveth God's wrath and damnation. How can we believe ourselves to be thus conceived and born in sin, thus by nature the children of God's wrath, and not be deeply humbled? What can be matter of greater humiliation, than to consider how low we are fallen, that we have lost original

righteousness, have lost the image of God, have lost his love, and favour, and grace, and have lost all hope, as to any thing we can do, of his glory? Let us then begin with lamenting the sinfulness of our nature, which is the fountain of all sin. Let us beg of God to cleanse it by the blood of Jesus, and to renew us daily by the grace of the Holy Spirit, that we may put off the sinful nature, the old man with his deeds, and may put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

SECONDLY, We have great reason to be humbled for the sinfulness of our lives. God requires nothing of us, but what is for his glory, and for our happiness. His law is holy, just, and good; but how often have we broken it, in thought, word, and deed—how presumptuously—after how many solemn vows and resolutions—against the light of conscience—against the light of the gospel—ungratefully, after receiving numerous mercies—hardened in sin, after being visited with heavy judgments? Who amongst us is not deep in guilt in these respects? Let us look back upon our past lives, and remember, wherein we have particularly offended. Let us recollect our sins of commission against God's holy law, and our sins of omission, with the aggravating circumstances attending them; and then, considering how injurious the least of these things was to the glory of God, let

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us be humbled to the very dust: For the scripture is clear, and exprefs, "that we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God," we have robbed him of his glory. Now it is our duty, as Christians, to live to the glory of God, and to have a fingle eye to his glory, even in the common affairs of life, when we eat or drink, or whatever we do. Have we then at all times, and in all things, had a fingle eye to God's glory? Oh guilty, guilty, must we all plead to this charge; with fhame and confufion of face must we confefs, that we have not fpent all our lives to God's glory! feldom have we had an eye to it; and when we had, very rarely have we indeed promoted it. And after we have thus taken an humbling view of our finful nature, and of our finful lives.

THIRDLY, Let the confideration of our national wickednefs humble us ftill lower before God. Christianity is the religion professed in this country. Ours is a reformed church. We are a free people. God continues to us the light of his gospel. We have his word and his ordinances, and all the blessings of the establishment. We are highly favoured above all the nations on the earth. Now to whom much is given, of them men always require the more, and fo does God. He requires more of the professors of Christianity, than of the ignorant heathen. But do we make him more returns of love and obedience, than they

they do? Look around the kingdom, and judge. You will find in several parts of this land, as great ignorance of the life and power of Christianity, as in the deserts of *Africa*. What distant corner of the kingdom has not heard the blaspheming tongue speaking treason against God our Saviour? And where is the happy village free from open and scandalous immoralities? Here is our condemnation, that light is come into the world, and shines among us, and yet we love darkness rather than light. This makes our sins exceeding sinful, that Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, and yet they abound among us. To repeat these works by name would be tiresome; to aggravate them is impossible. Open your eyes, you see them covering our land like a deluge. Open your ears, you can scarce hear any thing, but cursing, lying, and evil speaking. Go where you will, you meet with sin at noon day. It has thrown off restraint, and is not afraid to appear without a mask. Yea, sins abominable to nature are heard of in our land, and there are too many men among us, who refuse to believe, that God ever rained down fire and brimstone from heaven, and miraculously destroyed certain horrible monsters of sin. Stop, and consider, whether these things be so. If they be, have we not great reason for humiliation? Ought we not to be humbled for our national wickedness, and still more humbled, for that having so many

means of reformation, graciously vouchsafed to us, we not only continue wicked, but also are hardened, and thereby grow worse and worse.

While we are thus mourning for the wickedness of our people, let us never forget, that we ourselves are part of the people, and that our sinfulness has made a large addition to the national guilt. Let us never lose sight of this consideration, lest we should find matter for censoriousness, where we only want matter of humiliation. The sight of our sins, as part of the sins of the nation, will serve to keep us in a proper frame to profit from the

FOURTH humbling circumstance we have to mention, namely, that God is now visiting us for our public sins. This is the scope and design of his present judgments, and shall we not be humbled under his almighty hand? He has shewn himself offended at our sins, and has chastised us for them as a nation. Hereby he would teach us this useful lesson, that we should turn to him with a national repentance, if we hope to be pardoned and saved. If we now humble ourselves before him, his former chastisements will be turned into blessings: But if after being often chastised, we refuse to glorify him by our humiliation, he will certainly be glorified in our destruction. If the rod of his mercy does not humble us, the scourge of his justice shall destroy us. Humbled we have not been by any of God's past judgments,

ments, therefore we have reason to fear greater: for if being chastised for sin, we nevertheless will not leave it, what can we expect, but to be cut off in our sins? This has been the constant method of God's providence, in his dealings with private persons, as well as with public communities. Fearful is that sentence which is already gone out of the Lord's mouth—Oh that it may strike fear into every careless sinner, who hears it, "He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." *Prov. xxix. 1.* We have often been reprov'd, and yet we have hardened our necks, what then should hinder sudden destruction from coming upon us, and that without remedy? Let this awful consideration stir us up to plead earnestly with God for the hardness of the people's hearts. Let us be deeply humbled for those obstinate sinners, who refuse to be humbled for themselves, and let us beg of God to spare them. Spare thy people, O Lord, spare them, and give not thine heritage over to reproach.

Let us lay all these things together, and see whether there be not matter enough for the deepest humiliation. We are altogether sinful in nature, sinful in life, a country professing Christianity, and yet abounding with sin, and hardened in it at this very time, when God is chastising and punishing us for our sins. He has given us, during this unsuccessful war, some severe chastise-
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ments, but they have not brought us to a right sense of ourselves, and therefore we may expect they will be more severe. God has shewn us plainly, that he is not on our side, and we have felt his displeasure, but we are not humbled under it. Without humiliation he will continue to fight against us, and what calamity is there so great, which we may not then justly apprehend? What success can we hope from our fleets and armies, if the Almighty go out against them? What is our security as an island, if he put it into the hearts of our enemies, and if he come with them, to invade us? In this case how exceedingly should we be alarmed to think, that our sins may provoke God to join with our enemies, and to give them success. Every thing dear and valuable to *Englishmen* and protestants would then be lost. Heathenism and slavery would get possession of our religion and liberties. While God threatens us with these calamities, he gives us time to pray against them. While they are at a distance prayer is our weapon, and God seems now to put it into our hands. O that we may use it aright to his glory, and to the preservation of this church and kingdom.

My Christian brother, after you have weighed these things attentively, judge whether it be not a seasonable and a safe measure, which we would persuade you to take. And you will take it, if you are indeed a friend to our present happy
establishment

establishment in church and state. Your love for them will put you upon doing every thing that lays in your power to serve them; and here you have a fair opportunity, which if you make use of, it cannot but do you service, and may be a blessing to them. Pray for them at the appointed hour. Determine, through God's assistance, that nothing shall hinder you from joining us. Break through all engagements, all hindrances to meet the Lord's people at the throne of grace. And for your encouragement remember, that he who sitteth upon the throne is the God who heareth prayer, and who has invited you to call upon him in the day of trouble: So will I hear thee, says he, and thou shalt glorify me.

If it has pleased God to put it into the heart of any person who reads these few lines, to make part of this praying congregation, and he is at a loss to know particularly what he should ask of God; let him first beg of the Father of mercies to give him the spirit of prayer and supplication, that he may offer up his petitions acceptably through Jesus Christ our Lord. And then let him request the grace of humiliation, that he may be truly and deeply affected with the four particulars before mentioned. Let him pray to God to give him still more humbling views of his sinful nature, and to bring to his remembrance his sinful life, with the sinfulness of his sins, that seeing himself to be nothing but vile and sinful
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dust and ashes, he may be disposed to mourn for his own sins, and then for the crying sins of this guilty land, and for the hardness and impenitency of our people's hearts, upon which the heavy judgments of God have as yet made no impression. And then let him implore mercy first for himself, and afterwards for the nation, through the atoning blood of the Lamb of God. Earnestly let him plead with the Father, that for the sake of his dear Son he would give us grace to turn from our sins by true repentance, that iniquity may not be our ruin. And although the past judgments have not reclaimed us, yet let him pray the more fervently for the gift of the Holy Spirit, that his grace may be poured out abundantly upon us to shew us the error of our ways, and to revive the spirit and power of Christianity, that we may receive Christ Jesus the Lord as our Saviour, by the merits of whose most precious blood we may be saved from the guilt and punishment of sin, and by whose almighty grace we may also be saved from the dominion of sin, that being thus delivered by him from the hands of our enemies, we may serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.

In these our requests let us never forget to pray for the preservation of the protestant church, and all its members throughout Europe, and especially for the peace of our established church, and for all orders and degrees of its

ministers, beseeching God to give them his grace and heavenly benediction, that both by their life and doctrine they may set forth his glory, and set forward the salvation of all men. And to the end there may never be wanting such persons in the church, let us pray for all seminaries of Christian education, especially for the two Universities. May the Spirit of wisdom preside over them, and water them with the dew of his heavenly grace, that the youth educated in them may come forth to the work of the Lord fitted with all proper graces as well as gifts. And since the harvest is now great, may the Lord of the harvest send forth more of his own labourers.

May the God of love dispose us also to pray fervently for all the protestant dissenting congregations, which love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. May he shed that love abroad in all our souls, which alone can effectually free us from party spirit. And may he thus reconcile our hearts to them, and theirs to us. Oh that we may see an end of those bitter disputes, which have so long disturbed the peace, and hindered the union of protestants: and may there be only this one holy contention between us, whether the ministers out of the establishment, or we in it, shall labour most for the glory of our common Lord, and for the salvation of those souls for whom he shed his blood.

And as the hearts of kings are in the hand of God, we must pray him to direct the heart of
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our gracious sovereign lord king George, to do what will be for the glory of God, and for the good of his people, beseeching the Almighty to enrich him with every temporal, and with every spiritual blessing, until he place upon his head a crown of eternal glory.

Let us also pray for the queen, for the prince of Wales, and for all the royal family, that God would endue them with his Holy Spirit, and enrich them with his heavenly grace, that he would prosper them with all happiness, and bring them to his everlasting kingdom.

And let us desire the spirit of wisdom to direct both houses of parliament, all the kings counsellors, and judges, and all the magistrates throughout the kingdom, and to enable them faithfully to discharge the great trust reposed in them, for the punishment of wickedness and vice, and for the maintenance of God's true religion and virtue.

Let us beg of God now to go forth with our fleets and armies, and to give them success against our enemies in this war, in which we are engaged. And let us pray him to bless our officers, and soldiers, and sailors, and to protect them in all dangers, and to cover their heads in the day of battle. And let us earnestly and heartily pray for their reformation, and also for a reformation at home, without which we cannot expect success from our arms abroad. May the Spirit of the living God work upon the hardened hearts
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of our people, and soften them by his grace, that they may see the error of their ways, and cry for mercy before it be too late, and may they find it through the atoning blood of the Lamb of God. O that there may be a general turning to the Lord, and may our eyes live to see it. *Amen.* So be it, Lord Jesus.

These short hints may be enlarged and improved, as time and occasion shall offer. My Christian brother, may the Spirit of the living God direct thee, how to enlarge and to improve them. And after thou hast once begun, and hast spent some evenings of the Lord's day in this devout exercise, be upon thy guard, lest thou shouldst be tempted to leave it off. Never be tired of such a good work. Pray for the spirit of grace and supplication, and carry thy prayers into practice. The more thou prayest, the more will God make thee joyful in the exercise of prayer. Go on in his strength, and persevere. Hold on thy suit, and wait upon the Lord our God, until he have mercy upon us. Be not weary of joining with us, and in God's due time thou hast his promise, "thou shalt reap, if thou faint not." Lord, grant none of us, who set out well, may faint, until we who sow our prayers, and they who reap the fruit of them, may rejoice together, here in the peace and reformation of our land, and hereafter through Jesus Christ our Lord in eternal glory. *Amen.*

12 JY 62

THE END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

